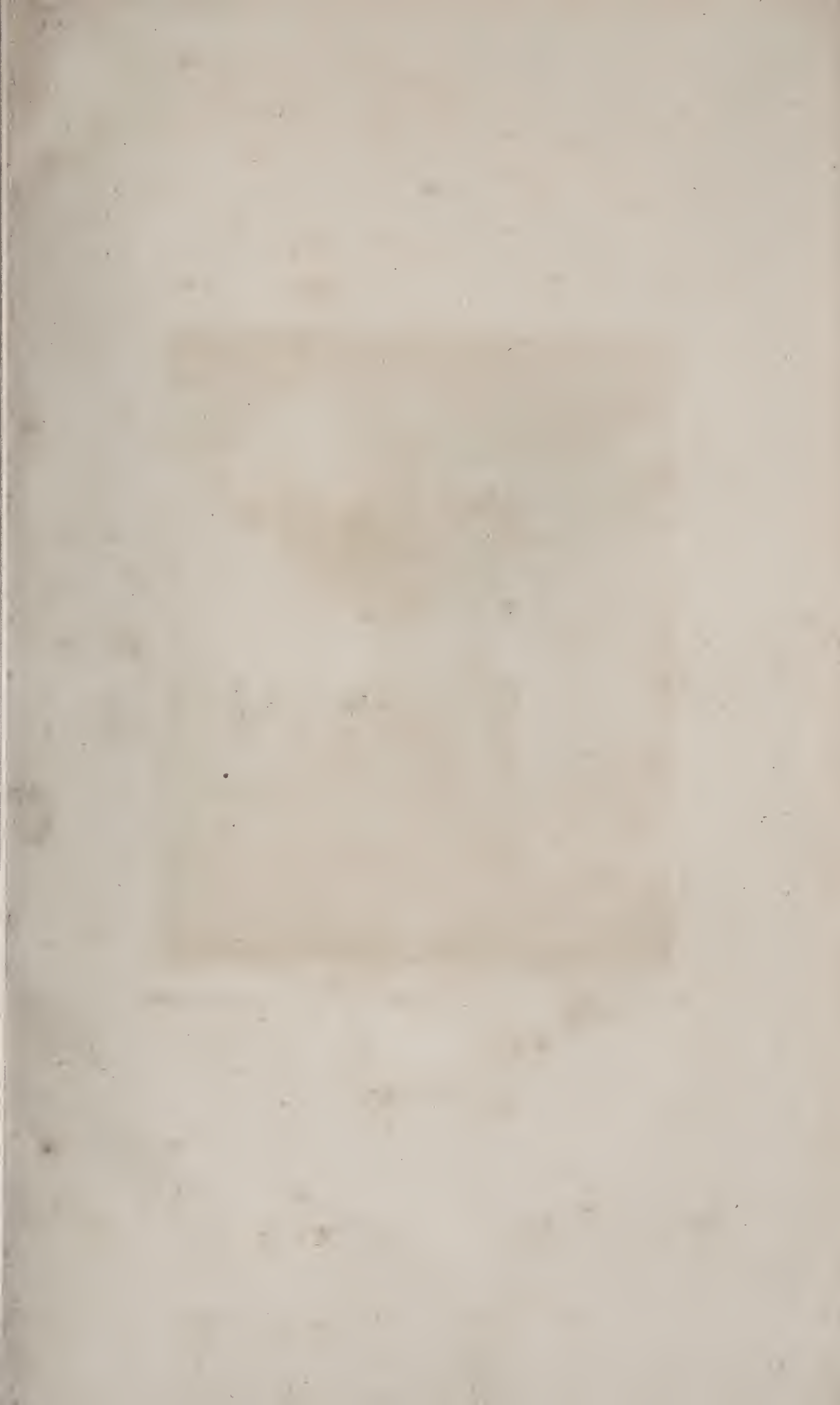
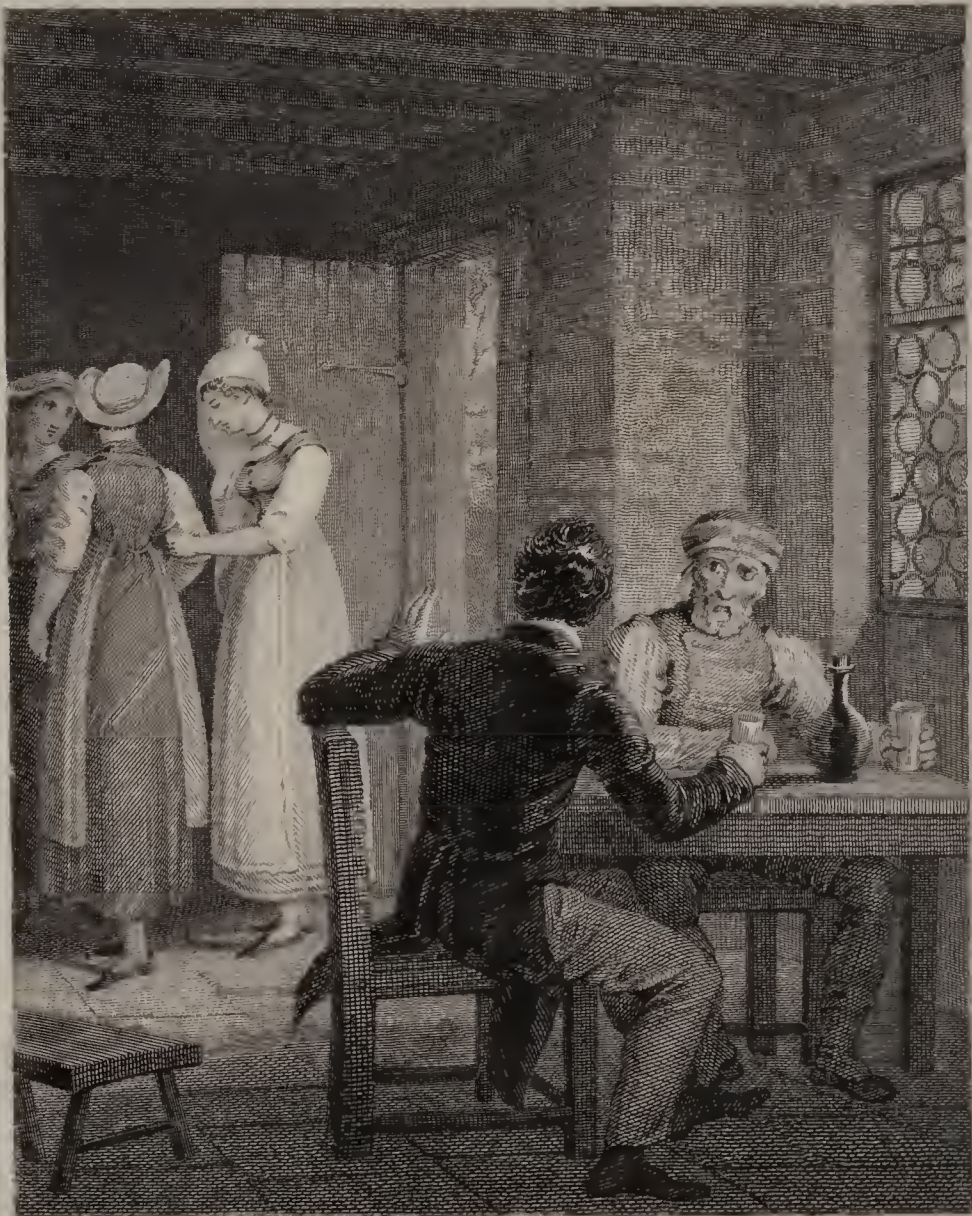




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Drawn by R. Westall F.R.A.

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TOUR
THROUGH A PART OF
THE NETHERLANDS, FRANCE,
AND
SWITZERLAND,
IN THE YEAR 1817:

CONTAINING A VARIETY OF INCIDENTS, WITH THE
AUTHOR'S REFLECTIONS, SERIOUS AND LIVELY.

BY THOMAS HEGER.

LONDON:

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PREFACE.

THERE is something so offensive to the feelings of an impartial reader, and tending so much to provoke his ill-will, in that complacency and self-approval which induces a writer to put forth a work for public opinion, without judging it necessary to bespeak a little indulgence on his undertaking, that I am induced, through fear of falling under such a disadvantage, to preface the little I have to offer with a few remarks.

During the Tour which gave rise to the following letters, it never once occurred to me, that I might ultimately be brought

to submit them to the ordeal of criticism ; and therefore devoted little of my time, in the excursion, to that minuteness of observation, and study of character, which alone could have rendered them a work of useful information. By this explanation I have of course shut myself out, even should my Tour succeed, from all claim to that higher class of praise, which is bestowed on works of laborious utility.

To what degree of approbation I may lay my claim, with any prospect of success, I am at a loss to imagine ; but as it must be presumed that I have not written with a total disregard to that, I will endeavour, by defining the humble character of my labours, to show with how small a portion I am prepared to be satisfied.

In order to arrive at this point, and find

out precisely on what ground, as an author, I may be allowed an undisputed footing, I will not begin by essaying my title from the very lowest ranks of composition upwards, lest, as I attempt to ascend, I may incur the charge of vainly aspiring above my rightful post: but if, from the mere love I have for better things, I take the heights of genius for my starting place, and commence my descent from thence, I shall be sure to find my proper station somewhere in the declivity, though it may be at the very foot of the hill; and as, in my progress, I shall be ever on the decline till I reach my point, my worst enemies will not be able to charge me with a too aspiring spirit.

Genius, as it is not an acquirement of man, but a gift of nature, is, of itself, no mark of merit, but only of good fortune in

the possessor of it ; and however it may entitle him to our admiration, can give him no claim upon our praise. The use that is made of it can alone stamp its value, which must ever be estimated, accordingly as it operates towards the benefit or entertainment of mankind. In the first it takes precedence of all other endowments, in as much as its power to do good is constantly increasing by its invention of the means.

This is, however, a class of excellence to which very few ever attain, and consequently a sacred ground, which my contracted faculties dare not presume to invade. The latter is of a more accessible nature, and may be trod, without much presumption, by all those who are able to throw an interest into common occurrences, and fill up their deficiency of incident from the stores of their own fancy.

To give a more decided color to the modest tints of truth, and a degree of piquancy to what seems to require nothing else to render it palatable, is the province of this latter class of genius : yet humble as it may appear, I have not introduced it with any view of scooping out a niche, even there, to erect myself in, to fame.

Having, however, descended thus far, I begin to feel my footing steadier, and that I am near upon the confines of the station where I may take my post. To come then, at length, to the little at which I aim—There is a kind of talent—I beg the critic's pardon, I mean a sort of—I really don't know how to call it, but a something which has a knack of putting words together, till a kind of composition is effected, at which those who are not over fastidious contrive to feel somewhat amused. It is here I make

my stand, and I think not sufficiently in any body's way to run much chance of being molested. It is on the first step of the ladder to fame, and if by accident I should be jostled off, it won't much matter, as I have not far to fall.

The ground-work of the letters I have published, is merely certain occurrences and objects that accidentally presented themselves in my progress through the country, and not any thing that I went in learned search after; with what degree of interest I have clothed them remains yet to be determined. The natural prejudice of every parent to magnify the merits and diminish the imperfections of its offspring, must of course render me the least impartial judge: yet, with all this, I am not sufficiently blinded to anticipate a much better reception of my work, than will serve

to protect me from the charge of intrusion. To compare small things with great,—the publication of a little *Tour* with the effecting of a vast revolution ;—like Cæsar on the banks of the Rubicon, I remained long undecided on the point, calculating on the probabilities of success or failure ; unable to arrive at any adequate conclusion, and unwilling to abandon my labors altogether ; like him, tired of further conjecture, I have thrown myself upon the hazard of my fortunes, and crossed the river before I could decide upon the wisdom or folly of it. Here all resemblance between us is at an end, even in the comparison of great things with small ;—he fought his way to empire and attained it—I seek no empire even of the pen, but only room sufficient to move it unmolested in, with neither suppleness enough to flatter, nor sharpness enough to wound.

Tour.

b

Should it be found, in this its first essay, to yield one spark of pleasure, I shall be encouraged to hope that there is more latent fire within it, which requires nothing to call it forth but increased exertion,—and that it shall have; but if otherwise, I am only like many more who have mistaken their vocation. Oh! should it thus befall me,—thou drowsy genius! who presidest over dulness, here, once for all, I abjure thy influence:—I have been no willing votary of thine, nor ever will be—how thou hast eluded, if indeed thou hast, the vigilance of my once better spirit, and contrived to steep me in thy laudanum baths, may be now too late to inquire; but if thou hast, take back into thy hands the symbols of thy service—the wreath of poppies and the leaden pen—for I will sin no more.—And oh! thou brighter genius! that I would have served, look down with

pity from thy myrtle bower, and if in some auspicious line of what I have written, thou canst discern one flash,—one single spark of thine—rescue me, I beseech thee, from trunk-lining and tailor's-pattern memory, and let that solitary spark set fire to all the paper I have wasted, that behind the smoking pile of useless labor, I may steal unnoticed into calm oblivion.

A TOUR,

&c. &c.

LETTER I.

Calais, June, 1817.

ON our arrival at Dover we found the Dart ready for sea, and stept from our chaise on board without the usual ceremony of alighting at an hotel; my anticipation, then about to realize itself, of sojourning for a while among a race of beings so distinct from ourselves in manners and habits, though separated from us by only a narrow channel, entirely absorbed my thoughts, and presented a thousand pictures to my imagination, of man in all the variety in which education and climate can present him. The wind was fair and brisk, and brought us into the harbor of Calais in the midst of my reverie. Here ended my thoughtful mood. I felt in landing, as if I had been touched by the magic influence of

Tour.

A

the place, for I moved forward towards the Hôtel de Lion d'Argent, no longer in the steady English stride, but actually to the measure of some lively air that seemed to be played by the very Zephyrs which we breathed. Music ushered us into our apartments, we dressed under its inspiring influence, and may actually be said to have danced to dinner; our orders to the garçons were executed in a *pas de deux*, and we drank each other's healths to the tune of Marlbrouk. As I cannot bear things done by halves, and the French will give you music for nothing, if you will not pay for it, and that too with almost as good a grace, I determined, for the credit of my country, not to be outdone in liberality, so ordered a party into our dining-room, who entertained us, during our repast, with a concert, vocal and instrumental, executed with good taste. Having satisfied them and ourselves on this head, I began to balance my mind to its original tone, for I had work to perform which required the aid of notes, very distinct from those we had just received; but at least as necessary to be played by us in turn. We were about to explore a few hundred miles of the land of our new acquaintance, and were yet without the means of conveyance. I sent for the

Maitre d'Hôtel, who strongly advised my adopting his recommendation, which was to hire a carriage and pair of him for the whole of the tour, returning of course to Calais. The only objection to his plan was the expense, which would have considerably exceeded English posting ; I therefore applied to Monsieur Peliser, a voiturier, who has furnished us with a good carriage, much resembling an English barouch, sufficiently large for three, (which you know is our number), and for which we are to pay him about a guinea per day.

In the hurry of preparing to quit this place, I had almost forgotten to tell you, that in order to fill up the time while Monsieur Peliser is himself engaged (for a Frenchman is never above his business) in brushing up our conveyance, that he may bring it nearer to the extravagant praise he had bestowed on its beauty, we went to view the church of Notre Dame. The building itself is grand, and the order chiefly Gothic ; but the coup d'œil of the interior is completely spoiled, by the wretched appearance of immense piles of old rush bottom chairs, filthy, and unrepaired, with scores of beggars half naked and quite famished, who never

cease their importunity for bread, from the moment you enter to that when you depart ; but though this materially interferes with the object of a visit of this sort, yet one cannot be angry with them, for he must have a churlish nature, or a thoughtless mind, who can quarrel with importunity in such a garb ; there is no remedy however ; you cannot minutely examine the place ; but enough of this, I fear, we shall have to encounter in our progress through a country, which, from its soil and climate, might pass for the garden to the rest of Europe. Good God ! in what consists the wisdom or justice of man, when so immense a portion of our fellow creatures are starving on their own fertile plains ? I must quit the gloomy picture : Monsieur Peliser has arrived with our barouch, and the dissonance of the cocher's whip, which is at this moment smacking a French cotilion, has put all arrangement of ideas out of my head. We proceed first to Brussels. I shall resume my narrative when we arrive there, as I mean to stop eight or ten days in that city.

LETTER II.

Brussels.

IN the vehicle I have described to you, drawn by a pair of good horses, under the management of a cocher, who seems to have no other care than that of the establishment inside and out, which had been entrusted to him, we quitted Calais, and launched forth into this world of life; and if to live consist in bustle and pursuit of pleasure, we had only vegetated up to that hour, we had not lived. Oh life! in how many different shapes and complexions art thou painted? To traverse the bleak mountain's summit; to brave the tempest, wearied out with toil; to eat the scanty meal from barren soils, and rest the limbs within the roofless hut; still this is life, Oh Cambrian, in thy hills; yet are you not without your share of joy—The harp still vibrates through your cragged rocks, and the rude dance declares the rustic pleasure of your wild abode.

On our arrival at Dunkirk, we ordered dinner at l'Hôtel d'Angleterre, and took a ramble about the

town while it was preparing. Our first attraction was the church of St. Allowin. Its entrance is a beautiful portico supported by fluted columns, with a triangular superstructure bearing a religious emblem on its centre. The interior consists of a nave with double aisles, each ending in a richly decorated altar; near the entrance of the outer aisles, and facing each other, are two more altars, immediately beyond which are the confessionals; during our stay there, the priest returned with the sacrament, escorted by a soldier on each side: he had been to administer to a dying person: this it seems is the usual practice on such occasions. The altar which terminates the nave is extremely beautiful, with paintings of the first masters adorning the sides of the sanctuary; behind this is a semicircular walk, which divides it from an altar in the rear. As I have not the talent, nor, indeed, the time if I had, to give a more architectural detail, you must be satisfied with the picture, and pardon the deficiency of light and shade. The other church, St. Jean Baptiste, is neat and commodious, but much inferior.

There is a certain indescribable sensation which I always feel, (and perhaps it is the same with all

mankind) on entering a structure dedicated to the author of all that was—that is—and that is to be—a chilliness pervades the frame, and seems at once to shrivel up the pride-swollen mortal (warm before in his own self-importance) into the little being which he really is; as if the Great Spirit had said, here ends your self-delusion; whate'er your wealth, whate'er your influence with mankind without these walls, here you are nothing:—bow, humble mortal, into thy natal humility; the life, even, which you breathe, you hold in favor from me.

Having returned to our hotel in a fit mood to partake of the blessings administered to us, we sat down with grateful hearts to the enjoyment of our repast, and spent the evening in regulating the manner in which we should pursue our journey.

On the following morning we proceeded towards Ypres, in French Flanders; but prior to setting off, we took another ramble in the town. It was beautiful weather, and every thing looked gay about us; what with the anticipation of a thousand new objects every day, and the actual scene before us, for the market-place, at which we were, was

crowded with groups of young French women, (the peasantry) who had come to sell their fruit, vegetables, and poultry—all this acting on the mind at once, completely dissipated our native English gloom, and produced a flow of high spirits, a sort of æthereal intoxication, in which one does a hundred things by the dictates of the heart, rather than the judgment. On such occasions, forgetful of decorum, I have almost persuaded myself that all mankind are equal, and could have joined in the dance with the humblest peasant girl, without conceiving myself a jot degraded by it. I would not be without the nature that inspired that feeling, to be the greatest thing the want of it could make me. High spirits have however their disadvantages, for I am never in that mood, but I could spend thrice as much as when the denseness of our atmosphere retards the circulation; and stepping into a shop close by, with my companions, we purchased a number of articles, merely because they were French, and found out a short time after, that we did not want them, and that if we did, we should be able to buy them in Paris, where they had been made, for half the amount. No matter, it was necessary to do something, and I might easily have done a

more foolish thing than this. Just prior to our entering Ypres, the beauty of the day suddenly changed, and a violent thunder storm ushered us into the town; the rain fell in torrents, and the tremendous peals seemed to have panic-struck the guard, for we entered this fortification without having our passports demanded.

This was the first town in Flanders at which we refreshed, if refreshed it can be called, to have dined on meat and fish dressed together in fat, and with wine that made us regret the table beer we had left behind us in England; but we started with minds prepared for privations, for we expected to find taste vary with country, and luxury is after all but a name which each man gives to what his appetite most desires; and the Princesses of Caffraria, who fried and devoured the boots of their father's guest, were as good judges of a delicacy in their own taste, as the city alderman over his turtle in his. By-the-by, the garçon at this inn is a perfect *fac totum*, who blends in his own person the entire service of the hotel establishment, save that of the kitchen, which duty, from the description I have given you of our entertainment, (had this too fallen to his lot)

could not have suffered by the change ; he makes all the beds, cleans the boots, &c. prepares the several dining-rooms, and waits at dinner, assists in the stables whenever uncalled by the guests, and is never at leisure till sleep has silenced the almost unceasing call of those about him ; he is nevertheless one of the civilest and best natured creatures I ever met with. Fortune has denied thee her favors and her smiles, but nature has been even with her, in giving thee a temper that repines not at the hardship of thy lot, and helps thee over thy rough and flinty way ; and will do this for thee to the end of thy journey.

About two o'clock in the morning I was awoke by a tapping at my door : it was François ; I let him in, and with a piteous face he told me, and in a whisper too, lest, I suppose, the police should hear him, that an express had arrived late in the night, from London, to apprehend an Englishman, and that from the description he was fearful it was me. I asked him what was to be done in case his suspicions were just ; he told me there was no time to be lost, as l'Intendant de la Police would be there at four o'clock to examine me. But what am I to do, François ? Il faut echapper, Monsieur. Mais com-

ment? said I. *Ma fois, Monsieur, je n'en sais rien.* So then, said I, you have come to disturb my rest for no other purpose, than to tell me two hours before my time of an evil which I cannot escape; I sent him away, however, assuring him of my innocence, and telling him to introduce l'Intendant as soon as he pleased. He was not satisfied, I am sure, with my assertion, for his look on leaving the room was truly expressive of his pity for my condition; an Englishman would have showed this by a sigh, full indeed of compassion, but nothing when compared with the shrug which François gave on quitting my chamber, unperceived as he thought, but reflected in the glass which faced the opening of the half closed door.

L'Intendant will be here, said I to myself, in a little time, and I must get up and dress myself at this unseasonable hour for his reception, restless and vexed with the intrusion. How much is man the creature of habit; and taught by necessity, he is brought to endure the sting of rigor without repining. François thought nothing of the intrusion on sleep; he had been himself accustomed to that, and made no apology for breaking in upon

mine; his sole anxiety was for my escape, and when he found my innocence rendered that unnecessary, he was satisfied, there was no harm done on either side. L'Intendant saw no resemblance in me to the picture he had received from London, and I was again at my own disposal.

The bad accommodation of this place induced me to leave it as early in the morning as possible, and we proceeded to Menin to breakfast; the storm of the preceding evening had refreshed the air, and the cool breezes of the morning greatly assisted in dispelling the vexation of a restless night and unsavory meal. To tell the truth, I was pleased with the early pursuit of our journey, not only on account of the freshness of the morning, but because it took me away, with rapid strides, from a place which looked like the residence of suspicion. However necessary in the calculations of war, there is no place I abhor like a fortified town; you are examined at the entrance and exit, and the place of your temporary residence is noted down; you can hardly be said to breathe, but on sufferance, and your progress is watched as it were step by step, till you have passed the outer guard. England! with

all thy imperfections thou hast here at least the preference, and though necessity require the rigor I lament in other lands, still, from local advantages, thou art free from this. The sea is thy armour, and liberty thy shield, which the swords of thy enemies can never penetrate, till the rust of thy own neglect shall mark its vulnerable parts; preserve it from decay, for thou hast nothing left when that is gone. Thy soil and thy climate are little in the scale of comparison; and stript of liberty, thou wilt become the last on the list of nations, for thy strength and thy riches are built on that foundation.

Having breakfasted, we proceeded to Courtray, a neat manufacturing town, where we stopped to refresh our horses, and spent the time required, in walking about the streets; the place appeared to me deserted, for excepting the Maitre d'Hôtel, and about a score of beggars, I scarcely saw a human being. I thought of Goldsmith's Deserted Village, and saw the melancholy picture realized; the ravages of war had thinned their habitations, and famine was hard at work on what the sword had left unfinished.

We now resumed our seats, and pursued our journey to Petighem, where we passed the remainder of the day. I think I hear you exclaim, well! you have reached another town, now for the church and Gothic arches! you may laugh, but you shall have it notwithstanding; it would be cruelty to the poor inhabitants to be quite silent on this head; they have little to show you but their church and their poverty, their rich paintings and their poor artists. Notre Dame, for this is the name of the church in question, is paved in the Mosaic stile, in diamonds of black and white marble. The entrance to the sanctuary is through a folding oak portal, whose pannels are richly carved entirely through the solid wood to resemble Flemish lace; within this is a fine painting by Jordance, of the Shepherds' Offerings; this picture was seized by the French early in the revolution, when the town was taken; but a painter residing there, named Cras, contrived to get it away, notwithstanding the soldiers had possession, and he preserved it in its hiding place, till the property of the church became again respected, when it was restored to its original situation.

We left Petighem early on the following morning, and arrived at Ghent to breakfast ; it was Sunday, and all the town, in their gay attire, were moving onward like a forming army to their rallying points. Whatever difference may exist in the religious opinions of men, there is but one ultimate object that they can have in view ; to be happy when called away from their sojournment here, is the common prayer of all mankind. On this point at least we all unite, and to this end were the population of Ghent then moving on. The example reminded us of our duty too, and before we proceeded further, we returned thanks that we had been enabled to reach so far ; for life is a journey, and at some post or other of it we shall find the mandate of limitation waiting our arrival. At five in the afternoon we reached Alost, where we remained for the day ; having ordered dinner we went as usual to see the church ; yes, notwithstanding the tautology of subject, we visited the church ; you see I have not yet furnished you with an opportunity to charge me with following pleasure to the neglect of that ; true, say you, but wait till you arrive at Paris ; we are all moral while we have no temptation to lead us astray. I admit the rebuke, for I have

passed through towns but not lived in them, and what I have hitherto seen has been more the beauty of nature, than the allurements of art.

We visited the church of St. Martin, which, like the others that we had seen, was far too grand for the town which it embellished. To see a magnificent structure towering over all around it, bearing the venerable stamp of ages on its bosom, and enclosing within the generations of a thousand years; the mind is awed in contemplation of its grandeur, and for a moment lost to all surrounding objects: we are lifted, by the imagination, to the immortality in which the souls now breathe, that once informed the silent tenants it encircles. The needy crowd here roused me from the reverie into which my fancy had strayed, and in a moment I found myself surrounded by wretched tenements, irregular and unrepared, and more wretched beings covered with rags and filth.

The church of St. Martin has twenty-four altars, at every one of which mass is performed on certain occasions at the same time. There is a most beautiful painting by Reubens, at one of these, of St.

Roque, with two smaller ones underneath it, being a continuation of the story ; they were covered with baize, which at our request was removed.

I know not how it is, but I cannot for the life of me abstract myself from intruding objects, so as to pursue uninterruptedly, that which it is my first wish to examine ; and here this imperfection of mine was particularly manifest, for the beggars, wanting almost every thing for their own comfort, were however amply provided with the means of annoying mine ; for wooden shoes are a luxury of which they have not been yet deprived, and on these clattering pedestals they followed us step by step, stopping at every point where our curiosity arrested us, and renewing their dissonant march, with the first signal of our advance. I quitted the church with little but the subject and fine colouring of the paintings, and left the master touches of the pencil to those, whose nerves may be callous to the interruption. I retired dissatisfied indeed, but not angry ; for I had no right to complain, who had paid nothing for the forbearance of our followers ; and they had at least as good a title as I had, to traverse the aisles of a cathedral, which, poor as they were,

Tour.

B

their ancestors in all probability had helped to erect ; and I know not whose fault it was, that they did not precede instead of following us. On arriving at our hotel, we found that our attendants at St. Martin had done us some good even in their annoyance, for they had driven us from the church just in time to save our dinner, which had been waiting for us. I could not think of paying them for their interruption, but I was not sorry for an opportunity to compensate them for thus enabling us to reach our repast in time. I ordered some white bread to be distributed amongst them, which was devoured with an avidity which we seldom see in our beggars in England ; and those who are obliged to eat what cattle would refuse, must have found this a luxury indeed ; whether idleness or want of work be the cause of this distress, I know not, nor would the opportunity of my transient stay among them enable me to learn. They were always sober, even from the account of those who spoke worst of them, and with this virtue they might perhaps be industrious too, if pains were taken to rouse them from the torpor of their fallen condition.

The garçon, in lighting me to my bed-room, (for

we have no chambermaids here,) told me that Lord Uxbridge had slept in it just before the battle of Waterloo; Well! said I, and what of that? If there be any virtue in it, the person who lay in it after him has had it all. Who slept here last night? C'étoit un étranger;—Yes! said I, he was no lord it seems, for you have taken no note of him; he might easily however have been as good a man, and I have no objection to be his successor. To tell the truth I was tired; and though I felt a trifle for the title of the room, I did not care to entertain the conversation with which the important subject seemed to have inspired my guide.

We breakfasted on the following morning at the little village of Assch, and from an eminence, about an hour's journey onward, we had the full view of the city of Brussels, which presented a very grand and extensive appearance; it is built on a hill, and descends on the side we entered at, to its base. The town is tolerably handsome taken as a whole, but the streets are much too narrow, and bear no proportion to the height of their houses. The town hall is a fine structure with a very lofty turret, and has completely the appearance of a church. As I

only reached this city the day before yesterday, I can give you but little account of it in this letter, but mean to resume the subject on our arrival at Paris, and shall then begin where I leave off in this. I mean to stay here about ten days longer, and what I can collect in that space of time, together with my adventures on the journey to the French capital, shall form the subject of my next.

LETTER III.

Paris.

I HAVE been eight-and-forty hours in this city, and as many times I believe I have taken up my pen to write to you, and redeem the pledge I gave in my last of resuming my narrative; but I have as often laid it down again, bewildered with the noise and confusion that seem to preside in one unceasing revel over this emporium of pleasure!—this magazine of gaieties! where art and science appear directed to no other end, than to dress up mirth in all the variety of colouring, that the genius of delight can inspire them with. Up to this hour I am unable to rally my scattered senses, or arrange my journey hither in any rational form or order. I will devote this day however to the occupation, and do the best I can with my subject; I know the indulgence which my descriptions will meet with, however tiresome or deficient of spirit, and whether I gallop or creep through the narration, I have vanity enough to believe that it will be full of interest, not indeed from the value of the detail, but on account

of the good opinion you have of the narrator. I proceed therefore without fear, and write to you in the same manner that I think to myself.

After I wrote to you at Brussels, I went with my companions to see the park there ; it is situated at the very summit of the town, and is eligible on account of its airy and healthful site ; and this, I lament to say, is its only recommendation. Its plan is sameness itself ; heavy formality pervades the whole, and I can compare it to nothing so apposite, excepting in extent, as a tea-garden, which is here and there to be found disfiguring the environs of our metropolis. Two rows of lime trees, about twenty feet apart, form the borders of some dozen gravel walks, all cast as it were in the same mould ; and excepting that a trumpery statue of Venus disfigures this, and a high and broad shouldered Apollo that, you might traverse the entire of this studied waste, without knowing that you had quitted the promenade at which you entered. A bason filled by the spouting of a little cupid in a wig, or some such figure, is the graceful finish to the walks which diverge from the grand promenades. One side of the square which forms the exterior of this park, (as it

is called,) is a court of justice, and what might be termed one of the wings of this building, is the palace, or rather residence of the Prince of Orange; the other sides are formed of handsome houses in which the officers of state, and the first families of the place reside.

The natives consider the scenery of this spot a sort of elysium; and perhaps it is so: for what business have I to set myself up against the universal opinion of a large city? my taste is certainly against it, and I have the voice of nature to back that; but the Brabanters are more the votaries of art, and their park was constructed to please themselves, not me, and it seems to have succeeded to a miracle in both instances.

On returning to our hotel I sent for our cocher, to desire he would have the barouche ready as soon as we had dined, for a drive to the palace of Lacken, the residence of the king of the Netherlands. *Ma fois! monsieur, est-il possible?* said he with a true French shrug, I have just finished the polishing of it, and trimming the horses for to-morrow; And why particularly for to-morrow, said I? *C'est la fête.*

de Waterloo, said he ; all the English families at the hotel have ordered their carriages for six in the morning, and tout le monde will be there ; Very well, said I, of course we will not on any account be left out then, and we will go to Lacken the day after.

As we learnt from our garçon, that there was no good accommodation at, or near Waterloo, we provided ourselves with cold provisions ; and after a refreshing sleep we took an early breakfast, and set out for the scene of that bloody day ; we passed through a part of the immense forest of Soigny, and here we saw the still remaining vestiges of the ravage of war. The wants of the army had thinned the foremost ranks of this stately wild, and the ashes of their bivouack still left the traces of their devastating progress. After traversing nearly three leagues of this shady course, made so welcome by a cloudless sun, we reached the village from which the battle took its name ; here having refreshed our horses, we proceeded to the field so lately deluged with the blood of conflicting nations. So strongly upon my mind was the contest of that awful day, that nothing but a dreary waste covered with the

skeletons of men and horses appeared in my fancy's eye; and there I saw the yet unburied thousands writhing in death's embrace, impatient at his tardy progress through their lingering ranks. Spirits of the brave! whether of friend or foe, rest ye in peace, for ne'er again shall war's rude clangor wake ye—rest in your iron shrouds! the cannon's roar shall never reach your blood-stained sepulchres—Peace to your manes!—the corn waves lightly o'er your trackless graves, and the sweet smile of nature has covered the gloomy desolation.

I must quit the scene;—descriptions enough have been given of the bloody proceedings, and I could throw no further interest into the gloomy picture. We took our refreshment at the wretched house of La Belle Alliance, which bears evident marks of the thunder of that day, and then returned to Brussels overpowered with the excessive heat. I had almost forgotten to tell you, that our garçon and cocher were wrong in informing us, that the fête was to have been that day at Waterloo; it was held in the city on the anniversary, and was celebrated on the 19th, on the field of battle; I was not sorry at the mistake, for the heat must have been intolerable,

when aggravated by the dust consequent on a large concourse of people. I learnt afterwards, that there had been nothing to see worth notice, so was glad we had otherwise employed ourselves, and this we did by visiting the gallery of paintings.

Though I cannot discuss the respective merits of the pictures, yet I will enumerate a part, at least, of those which I saw. The conversion of St. Bavo; the Martyrdom of St. Livin; the Whipping of our Saviour; the Assumption of the Virgin (which had just been restored from the Louvre at Paris); and the Descent from the Cross; all by Rubens. In the painting of the Martyrdom I was particularly struck with the purity of countenance, the meek resignation of the martyr, whose eyes are actually speaking for the tongue of which he had just been deprived; they seem as if they said—I bow with patience, Oh Lord! to thy divine will, and in imitation of thy mild example, I crave thy mercy on my executioners. The demoniacal expression of the savage who holds the blood-stained knife between his tight pressed lips, is, in my opinion, the ultimatum of the infernal. There is but one painting by Vandyke, which is the Elevation of the Cross. The works of

Gaspard de Crayer, are the Triumph of St. Catharine; the Miraculous Draught of Fishes; and St. Antony and St. Paul, as Hermits; the Repose of Diana, by Mignard, is a beautiful performance; as also the Adoration of the Shepherds, by Paul Véronèse. Christ in the Sepulchre, by Michael Angelo de Caravaggio, is considered a master piece; but age or accident has rendered its beauties less conspicuous to my limited judgment. There is a fine little picture, but I could not learn the artist, of a Flemish Boy examining a piece of gold coin; it is nature itself.

This exhibition, together with the museum of natural history completely engaged our time till dinner; you must not expect any thing like an account of what I saw here, my letters would thus become rather tedious than interesting, for however useful the information, it is too dry for narrative, and I could communicate but little amusement in the detail. One thing at least I must speak of on account of its extraordinary nature; the Americans, I forget the year, in order to destroy the Dutch shipping in the Texel, conveyed there several casks of a peculiar worm, which they emptied into those waters;

the result was, that they ate their way into the hulks of the vessels, which in a short time became completely rotten ; a piece of the timber, thus rendered useless, is preserved in spirits at this cabinet, containing still the destructive agents in the holes which they had made. I mention this circumstance because I do not remember that we have any such curiosity at our British Museum.

We next went to see the abbey of St. Gudule. I am not certain that I have spelt the Saint's name rightly, for she is a perfect stranger to me, though patroness of the city ; and this piece of ignorance may easily be forgiven, when it is considered that she was introduced without any previous notice, out of a list of eleven thousand, which I believe is the number of the canonised ; I have, however, spelt it agreeably to the pronunciation, and you may depend on the sound at least, if not on the orthography.

By this time I am sure you must be tired of my descriptions of this nature, and so conscious am I of it, that you see I have abandoned my usual method of introducing the church to you as my first

acquaintance in every new town; I must not however neglect the subject altogether, but will bring it to your notice, in as novel a manner as circumstances will permit. Its order of architecture is much the same as that of the other churches of the Netherlands, and it has nothing of which I would speak in particular, but the fine paintings on glass. The most ancient performance of this sort is on the left side as you face the altar, the colouring of which is superb,—that on the right, though it appears rich, (if examined first) is very inferior to the other. It was a priest of the establishment who was our guide, and he explained to us every thing worthy of notice.

I must confess, and you who know me so well will have no trouble in comprehending me, that I was much annoyed on his account, and deterred from making a thousand enquiries, for I was constantly teasing myself as to what I should do to compensate his civility. It was not the amount, for I would gladly have paid a louis d'or to have got rid of the doubt; but he was a gentleman and a scholar, and I would not insult him with that. I could give you an account of the fine pulpit, but he was ex-

plaining the richly-carved emblems during the height of my perplexity, and whatever my companions may remember of it, I was totally lost to every thing, but how I should repay him for his trouble and politeness. What was I to do? I observed a native of the place advancing towards us; well! thought I, he may understand these things, so I'll e'en whisper him as to the custom; I did not like to do it, but there was no alternative; in all the churches we had hitherto visited, our guides had every visible mark of interest in their courtesy:—here it was quite another thing, and stepping aside, as if to look at a painting, I made the painful enquiry; what was my astonishment when the stranger having eyed the Reverend Divine from top to toe with the utmost significance; *Donnez lui un franc*, said he, and left me petrified at the indignity. *Donnez lui un franc!* said I, yes,—I see you are a native of the place, your niggardly spirits have chilled the sensibility of nature, and you recommend to others the penury you adopt yourselves; but for the starving condition to which your avarice has reduced your spiritual guides, this Divine, this Gentleman, and Scholar, had not been driven to the necessity of bartering civility for bread. I could not follow the advice I

had sought, even in giving ten times the amount, and I conferred a compliment on myself, not on him, when I solicited his company to dinner at our hotel, and here, in the conviviality of his disposition, his gentlemanly deportment, and intelligent mind, I found that I had only increased the obligation which his first attention to us had laid me under : I could not be quits with him for the life of me, and I feel myself his debtor still. I shook him heartily by the hand at parting, and retired to rest ; but the recollection of the adventures of the day followed me to my pillow, and kept me watchful beyond my usual time.

To want fortune, said I, in the estimation of the world, is to want every thing ; neither education, nor talents, nor all the other requisites to embellish life, can compensate the want of that. I'll think no more of it, it only makes me melancholy, and can answer no good end ; so turning in my bed, I invoked the genius of sleep, who on all occasions had been more kind to me than the fickle goddess, and passed in sweet transition from her scurvy treatment both of the poor priest and myself, into the

regions of fiction, and found in her imaginary reign a transient relief from the neglect of fortune.

The following morning we loitered about the town, but met with no adventure worth recording. I am not much of a loungeur myself, and feel little interest where I have not some positive object to pursue; and to be one in Brussels, is to waste time indeed. To admire elegance of deportment and dress in the females of any country, is much in return for the time it requires of us, and I have never been displeased with myself, when a morning's lounge has been thus rewarded; but in Brussels you have little chance of this; excepting that here and there an English or French lady embellishes the promenade, you have nothing to admire. The Flemish women (with only one exception that I could make during my stay,) are not stamped in that fine mould from whence the graces issue; they are tall enough indeed, but they are thick and shapeless too, and however regardless of expense they may be in decorating such forms, they have not the art of setting themselves off to advantage; they are deficient in that simplicity of taste, which, generally speaking,

is peculiar to our own country-women ; these sometimes indeed run into extremes, because the very height of real grace to which they constantly aspire, is nearest to the boundary which separates it from extravagance, and the effort to reach the one will sometimes impel them to the other ; but their own good judgment soon restores them to their former limits of discretion.

The Brabanters are a heavy people, of few words, and less expression : they are eternally smoking their pipes, which they reluctantly withdraw from their mouths to answer your interrogatories ; but *I* have no reason to complain of this, since the *ladies* can inspire them with no higher respect ; and I have seen, not unfrequently, a gentleman, as he should be at least from his rank in life, addressing a lady in inarticulate sounds from one side of his mouth, while with the other he was bursting upon her, as from a volcano, till they were both lost in one impenetrable cloud. The French cannot bear the Belgians, for their want of manners and respect to their women ; and in this I cordially agree with them, though I cannot but think, that in order to avoid one extreme, the Parisians have run into another.

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though by no means so reprehensible. They overdo these things ; and in their anxiety to keep up their national character for politeness, they are guilty of a thousand extravagances. There is nothing which distresses a Frenchman so much as an omission on this head. It is the wound on his fame for politesse, however, which pains him more, *much* more than the consciousness that the lady has been deprived of a portion of the civility which is her due. A Frenchman has a character at stake in this respect, and he would not for the world that it should be called in question : he has thrown the gauntlet to the universe, and there is nothing would astonish him so much as to see a champion who dare pick it up. But I am wandering from my subject. I have not got you into France yet, and should withhold my opinion on French manners till then.

In the afternoon we took a drive to see the palace of Lacken, the residence of the king of the Netherlands, about a German league from Brussels. It is very pleasantly situated on the summit of a verdant hill, commanding an extensive view. We could not procure admission to the interior of the palace, as their majesties were then residing in it ; so we

were obliged to console ourselves with a ramble about its vicinity. I am not aware that we lost much by the disappointment, for its exterior impressed me with little, if any idea, beyond the splendor of many of the mansions of our English nobility.

On the following morning I took a solitary stroll, as a farewell visit, to the park, of which I have not been sparing in my comment; indeed I ought to have done so on the score of charity, for I had been out of temper with it, and I could not bear to quit the city without some endeavour at reconciliation: but we could not make it up to the satisfaction of either. I had not influence enough to convert the waste into a useful meadow, and in its present temper there was no coming to terms with it. As I was turning my back on it, perhaps for ever, a couple of French flower girls, French I say, for I am sure no other country than France could have given to want, the mirth and pleasantry of minds at ease, danced up to me in all the air and taste of better life, tendering their bouquets, and seeming to entreat my acceptance of them. As I had not been accustomed to be thus solicited by our Covent Garden retailers, I was for a moment at a loss how to

act ; to pass them by in contempt was quite impossible ; there was too much good humour about them for that ; so giving them a franc between them, they decorated my bosom in spite of my resistance, and dismissed me with an air of courtesy, the exercise of which is considered in France as much the grace of the hovel as of the court ; and so perhaps it ought to be every where, for civility cements society, and though it cannot straighten the crooked path of life, it smooths the surface of the rugged way, and holds an arm to the exhausted traveller at every stile that intercepts his progress.

I went to see the ceremony of mass at the church of St. Gudule, and here a poor old man shabbily attired, and nearly blind, had just been receiving the sacrament : he was feeling his way from the sanctuary along the side of one of the aisles, as well as his infirmity of sight would permit ; but making bad work of it, I wished myself nearer to him that I might have rendered the assistance he stood so much in need of. He was at one of those stiles to which I have alluded, and I was fearful that the helping arm was not awaiting him, for we were still among the heavy Brabanters, who seem too intent upon

their own affairs to spare a little to the call of others. But I was mistaken, for a lady nearer to him than myself, and who seemed to be actuated by my own feelings, immediately tendered her arm, and would have conducted him to her chair; but his object was to quit the church, and with the air and ease of a perfect gentleman he returned her to her seat, and bowing in the most graceful manner for her politeness to him, he proceeded through the church.—Oh what a grace do manners give to man! it is not the purple that dignifies the prince; it is not his diadem that makes him noble; his throne and all its jewels could not make the clown respectable; nor could they him without the grace of manners; yet dignity and grace can shine through rags, and so they did in this poor man, who once had been a gentleman, even in the opinion of those who judge by stile alone; and though no longer so to such, he had not altered. The times had changed; the storm of revolution had been laying waste; the lightning had struck the equipage, but not the man; he had outlived his fortune, and was now travelling barefoot through the last stage of his journey here: it was the Count de ———. In early life he had been the pride of the Court of France,

full of the reigning taste for splendor, and with an influence that seemed to defy the wreck of fate;— but all is over; not a ray of that bright radiance left to light him through his dismal closing day. Oh ye who triumph now in fortune's sunshine! remember ——

I was going to say more, but I think I hear you laugh outright at me, as you have sometimes done on such occasions, as if you would question the sincerity of my moralising. I know your reason for it well enough, but remember I never admitted it as conclusive. The cheerful may be as earnest in their serious calculations as the gloomy and the self-denying. My usual flow of spirits is no more at variance with this sometimes melancholy mood of mine, than the vivacity of May with the gloom of November. It is the seasons united which form the year, and neither that nor life was meant to be a perpetual spring; but as some climates enjoy more of that smiling season than others, so are some minds blest with more vivacity; and such is mine, though nothing abating the sincerity of my moralising.

In a former part of this letter, when speaking of

the want of beauty and elegance in the Flemish women, you may remember I made one exception. I ought not indeed to have made this distinction, without accompanying it with her description; for curiosity should not be wantonly raised, being no unimportant matter with a woman, and whatever our sex may boast of being superior to it, I must admit no very inconsiderable one, even to man.

I was introduced to a family in Brussels, the ladies of which (not to be ungallant) impressed me with no conception of the feminine: they reminded me of plants that grow wild, and had remained so too long to be transplanted: they wanted pruning and culture, but the season was past for that. I have seen, and perhaps you have too, a wild of fern that looked as if the hand of care had never touched it, and yet through Nature's freak, or other cause, I have sometimes found within its bosom a solitary rose hiding its lovely bloom, and have perplexed myself with thinking by what hard fortune it had strayed from home, and took up its abode with such companions. There was one among the group of ladies to whom I have alluded, who from her form,

her face, and manners, could have, I thought, no business there ; but like the rose had got amongst them by some hapless chance. She was not fair nor dark, but of that shade which is mixed up with the best of both : her eyes are hazle, with the rich dark brown distinctly marked, full of expression of the softest nature, having nothing of the jet black insipidity about them : her dark hair hung thick and full in natural ringlets round her head, in the fashion of the paintings of Ninon de l'Enclos. I have no more description to give you of her ; the rest of the picture corresponds with the little I have painted, and you can easily finish the piece in your own imagination. She is seventeen, but has the fulness and form of twenty ; she seemed to claim nothing on the score of beauty, but by her affability would lead you to suppose she was endeavouring to compensate the total want of it. I am sure she made but small account of it, for her eyes were never wandering in search of admiration. She has an amiable heart, or I have no penetration. Sweet flower, adieu ! thy beauty will be courted by-and-by to grace some rich parterre. Oh may the hand that bears thee from thy bower be tender of its prize, and plant

thee out of reach of every harm, but most of all neglect; for if I judge thee right, thou'lt wither soonest there.

As I meant to leave Brussels on the following morning, I proposed a party to the theatre, and had the pleasure of the company of our Ninon de l'Enclos and sisters; and no small one I consider it, since it gave me an opportunity of discovering in my conversation with her, that she had a mind as well constructed as her face and person;—and what of that? what benefit can such a discovery be to you? No, you will not ask that, for we may feel interested without being in love, or having a benefit in anticipation for ourselves. I should regret exceedingly, that beauty like hers should be without the protection which good sense can never fail to afford: besides, I might even be in love, and that hopeless too, yet feel the same good wishes for the welfare of the object, as if my suit were favored: this I am positive I could feel, though under no necessity of thus exerting myself on this occasion. In order to remove your doubts on this head, should you still have any, I am going to give you some description of the theatre, and the style of acting, which be assured I

could not do, had love devoted my mind and heart to a single object.

At each extremity of a tolerably long hall, as I suppose I must call it, is a wretched dirty deal staircase, much resembling the garret flight of a common house in London, with a white-washed wall on one side, and a greasy unpainted balustrade on the other; these lead to the boxes. Having arrived at the first landing-place, I was going to call for the boxkeeper, when an old creature, much like what we call a washerwoman in London, excepting that she had nothing clean about her, stepped up, and told me I could gain no admission in that circle, as the boxes were all engaged. Well, thought I, there can scarcely be any thing worse than this;—so shew us e'en where you please. But before I take you to the cell which was destined to entomb us during the performance, I cannot refrain from letting you have a peep into this circle of taste and fashion. You would, no doubt, be impatient to have the sketch of a place, so much in request, that notwithstanding our early arrival, there was no possibility of procuring a seat in it. Well, you will say, the paltry staircase, no doubt, was meant as a foil, or rather

to prepare the mind to expect nothing but mean accommodation, and in the moment of this wretched anticipation, the splendor of a palace will burst suddenly upon the astonished stranger, and produce a sort of magical sensation, to keep him in good humour the remainder of the evening.

A lobby of quite sufficient width to admit one person at a time, without his rubbing the chalk off the deal box doors with one shoulder, or the grease off the staircase balustrade with the other, formed the elegant lounge about this receptacle of the beautiful and fashionable. No fear of ill-breeding had here suggested the necessity of lock and key, as at our London theatres, where impertinent intrusion would otherwise dislodge, perhaps, the peaceful possessors from their seats. An iron thumb latch forms the easy means of entrance and exit to these tasteful retreats from the discord of public business. Some four or five rush-bottom chairs decorate their sides, and a red camlet curtain in front, receiving the rays from an iron chandelier in the centre of the house, throws a delicate tinge over the whole, which, during the hours of representation, gives the lime-washed sides of the interior of the boxes the

appearance of pink distemper, without incurring the expense. Here, however, we were not permitted to remain, but sought our evening's retirement in the circle above it, which was no way inferior, except that being without the curtain, we were deprived of the pink embellishment which added so much to the beauty below. The pit is divided by a partition ; and for the seats in that part nearest the orchestra a higher price, I understand, is paid than for those in the other. The performance was *Beauty and the Beast*, and he who played the latter seemed perfectly at home in the part : this was followed by a comedy of three acts, the name of which I have forgotten.

I am sufficiently acquainted with the French language to answer every general purpose, and am seldom at a loss in reading it ; but I am not sufficiently master of it to follow the performers through all the variety of fits and starts of passion, and through their frequent rapids of speech, if I may be allowed the expression. On this explanation I must rest my apology for not giving you a critical account of their style of acting ; for sometimes when I have caught the subject in the tranquil part of a scene, or (to use the term of a critic) in the level

speaking, I have been thrown out by the full gallop into which the declamation has suddenly started. Indeed there was little to entertain me at this theatre, and I must confess that on that account I did not care to put my judgment much on the stretch.

I found ample compensation, however, for this want of interest in the agreeable conversation of our Ninon (for such I must continue to call her). She is by no means nationally vain, and agreed with me in deploring the insignificance of their theatrical establishment. I asked her if I should find the performance much superior at Paris. She had never, she told me, been out of the Netherlands, and was therefore incompetent to judge on their comparative merit; but as more encouragement was given in large and wealthy cities, she had no doubt but I should find it so; and to support this reasonable ground for her opinion, she asked me if I did not find the talents and style of our London theatres much superior to those in the other towns of England. I of course admitted this, but urged that it was not to the point, as we were speaking now of the comparative excellence of countries distinct from each other, and not on that of the different cities of

the same nation. She smiled at this, and observed, as she was born during the dominion of France over her native country, she had so long been accustomed to consider herself a Frenchwomen, that she doubted whether she could ever bring herself to relinquish a title for which she had so decided a preference. I do not wonder at this, nor will you I think, when you recollect the description I have already given of the manners of her countrymen; for she is an elegant girl, and must find the politeness of the French more congenial to her taste: but she did not seem aware that by claiming France for her country on the grounds she stated, she was degrading its character for politesse, since she thus transformed the Belgians, with all their coarseness, into Frenchmen. I would not urge this point, however, and as she seemed so earnest to retain the title, I left her in undisputed possession of it.

On the following morning I took my leave of the family, and was fortunate enough to find our Ninon at home. I don't know whether I ought to rejoice or not at the custom of a country which sanctions a familiarity at parting, that only tends to increase the regret of separation. From the nature of my

introduction there, I was on a very intimate footing, and took no more than the privilege of custom. To have kissed the mother and two of her daughters only, would have made an invidious distinction, and to avoid that, I was obliged to include Ninon in the ceremony. It would have implied something had I left her out, and no one could have imputed my forbearance to disinclination. If I were wrong, it was my first and last offence there, and may easily be forgiven: but custom is every thing, and perhaps after all, I was the only one who thought at all upon the business, and even that thought would have been spared had Ninon been cast in the common mould.

I thought that long before this I should have brought my Tour up to Paris; but, I know not how it is, my pen keeps running on with what comes uppermost in my recollection; and while I am writing I find a thousand things to say to you which never occur to me at other times, and you see the most trifling matters find free admission into the narrative; but as I should speak to you of these things if they recurred to my memory when in London,

why should I hesitate to communicate them here? You are not a critic, but even if you are, you are also a friend, which would forbid a too rigid scrutiny.

It's now two in the morning, and I have almost written myself into the vapours, for the creaking even of my *escrutoire* startles me.—Good night.—I'll resume my subject in another letter at my first leisure.

LETTER IV.

Paris.

I THINK I finished my last by taking leave of Brussels, or rather of Ninon, for there was little else to regret leaving behind, and to say I did not regret this, would be coldness indeed. I am not ashamed of acknowledging what I conceive all would feel who had seen and conversed with her; indeed had I a mistress to whom I was betrothed, I would write to her in the same strain; for not to admire beauty or be pleased with good sense wherever I found them, would imply an insensibility to the better qualities of the sex, and leave her to wonder to what she was to attribute my attachment to her; if she were jealous it could be but for a moment, since were there real cause for that, she would be assured I should have kept the secret to myself. Confidence in becoming mutual only tends to strengthen itself, because what it communicates, though it may be a sin of the judgment, is never of the heart, and it serves to furnish opportunities for setting all right again; and this I would have my wife feel, (should

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I ever possess one,) as the surest guardian of my affection for her, and if I know myself, I should exact no more than I would cheerfully pay.

About a mile on our way to Mons, (which town was the extent of our first day's journey) we overtook our reverend guide of St. Gudule Abbey, of whom I gave you some account in my last; he was going on foot to a village on our route, about two German leagues off: the day was exceedingly hot, and I proposed his joining our party, which he readily accepted, and I was pleased at the opportunity of taking my leave, by an act of civility, of one who had shown us so much attention.

The country through which we passed to Mons, is rich and well cultivated, abounding in corn, but presenting nothing for a romantic taste; the scenery is too flat, and even, with little diversity of hill and dale. We dined and slept at Mons, but arrived too late to feel any desire of visiting the church, or other buildings of the place that evening; and indeed the very bad accommodation we met with at the Couronne Imperiale, (the best hotel of the town) lessened our desire of devoting any part of the follow-

ing morning to this purpose. I was vexed, but not disappointed, with our treatment; for on our first arrival in the inn-yard, I saw the hostess tricked out in the height of fashion, coquetting with some half dozen French officers, and totally unmindful of her duty. At first I judged that our being English was the cause of her neglect, but on the instant two other carriages arrived with a Prussian family, who were doomed to suffer the same indifference from our fashionable hostess; she was not, for a moment diverted from her dalliance, excepting that she called to her husband to go and see what was wanted; at which bidding, a poor miserable creature, with a long queue, and death-like visage, instantly appeared, and made every possible apology for not attending sooner. It was pretty clear who was the master of this hotel, and to whose exclusive use the profits of it were appropriated, for the poor husband was literally a caricature of shabbiness, and her majesty of the Couronne Imperiale, decked out as if she believed herself mistress of the crown, instead of the sign of it.

Early on the following morning we set off for Cambray, but owing to the indisposition of one of

our party, we did not proceed further than a lone house, beautifully situated within about one mile and a half of the little, but powerfully fortified town of Bouchaine. Here our accommodation made ample amends for the neglect of Mons. The mistress was the most obliging woman in the world, and I am not certain but she was the largest too; for though she was only six feet high, she had a breadth that required ten of length, at least, to make the person in proportion; but she was handsomer and better formed in my eyes, with all this defect, than the richly decorated hostess of Mons; so blind does good nature make us to the imperfections of the dwelling in which it resides.

On pursuing our journey in the morning, we stopped at Bouchaine to see the fortifications: one important part of the strength of this place is, that it can be surrounded by water for a considerable extent. With a garrison of five hundred men, it stood a siege against thirty thousand of the enemy, who were unable to take it by force: it ultimately surrendered to famine. The Danish contingent are now occupying this fortress. We arrived at Cambray to a late breakfast; the head-quarters of the

British army are in this town, a part of which we had the pleasure of seeing in review : here I was obliged to deposit the passport I had received from the French Ambassador in London, and was furnished, in lieu, with a pass to Paris, to which city the one I had given up was to be forwarded, and which I was to reclaim from the police department there.

Before quitting the town, we went to the cathedral to see the paintings by Geerearts which adorn the altar and sanctuary. They are in imitation of sculpture, and I never saw a more complete optic illusion. They do not represent the figures merely projecting, as in basso relievo, but as if one's arm could actually encircle them ; so truly has the artist given the semblance of space to the back ground of his pictures : indeed I was obliged to touch the canvass, before I could bring myself to resist the force of appearance.

A little old woman, about three feet high, conducted us through this church, and conceiving it necessary to be mightily officious in order to increase her claim on our liberality, she led us to and fro through all the windings of this spacious edifice, as

if to bring us at length to some important point ; and so indeed she did,—not in her display of the vestments, which seem to have been shewn or worn, till little remained but the dirt which had accumulated in these endless exhibitions ; but to that more attentive point, that magnet to our hopes and wishes, which, notwithstanding the wholesome lessons so repeatedly read against it in sermon and philosophy, seems still to hold its undiminished sway over all mankind. The little woman's wants were few, and as a two franc piece could make her rich, without making me poor, I thought the sacrifice reasonable enough, and I had no delicacy here, as at St. Gudule. Before I get back to you, however, I may be waited on by some Lady Abbess in the same manner as by the priest at Brussels, and should this happen, I fear I shall be involved in an inextricable dilemma as to the manifestation of my gratitude ; for I cannot ask her to dinner, nor express my obligations in the manner they were offered to Ninon. I will not however anticipate difficulties, but trust to expedient, which has generally proved my friend on the spur of the moment.

We now proceeded to Peronne, another strong

town in this line of fortifications: here we passed the remainder of the day, and pursued our journey early on the following morning, in order, that night, if possible, to reach Pont St. Maxence. It is however theory only, to plan; we easily arrange the manner, and see little difficulty in accomplishing the object which we have made up our minds to attain; we seldom take into the scale of objections, mere possible impediments, but rather pave our anticipated way as smooth and even as our wishes can require; but it is practice to execute, and here we are doomed, not unfrequently, to find that our facilities were but ideal, and that difficulties which never entered our heads before starting, assail us in the experiment, at every stage of our progress.

We had never calculated on the constant wear and tear of our wheels over the rough-paved roads of Flanders, and were rather vexed than astonished at finding our progress suddenly arrested by a fracture, that seemed to require more surgical talent, than the retired situation in which we were obliged to stop was likely to furnish. We were now far advanced in the day, and uneasy at our situation, being several miles from the village of Gournay

Sur Aronde, which was the nearest place where we could hope to find any thing like accommodation ; but how to reach it was a mystery : to remain in the road all night was no very cheering prospect, and how to avoid it, no very easy calculation. "There was no going hence, nor tarrying here." To waste our time in fruitless lamentations would have been idle indeed, so I sallied forth to the top of a little hill, to discover, if possible, the mansion, cottage, or hovel, of some reasonable being, on whose hospitality we might venture to throw ourselves, till some remedy could be found for our disaster.

From this eminence I had the pleasure to see, at about half a mile distant, a group of peasants dancing on their new-shorn meadow ; they were celebrating the completion of their hay-harvest, and towards this jocund train we bent our steps with refreshed spirits, scarcely lamenting the accident that had just before appeared to us without remedy. Behind a clump of lime-trees at the extremity of the field, stood the humble abode of these honest rustics, and here we were cheerfully invited to partake of their cottage fare. To such as have never stood in need

of casual hospitality, this incident would furnish little interest, but to such as have partaken of it, it will serve to recal the pleasing adventure, and revive in them the perhaps neglected love which we should feel for one another ; it is a lesson at least in favor of mutual kindness, and can show the loftiest of mankind, that there are situations in which even he must be reduced to the common level of dependent man.

With the assistance of these obliging peasants, the damaged wheels of our carriage were conveyed to a little hamlet, about two miles across the country, where they were left for repair ; and the vehicle being safely lodged in the barn of our new friends, we set about making ourselves as cheerful as we had before been vexed. The evening was serene and beautiful, and having seated ourselves on the trunk of a fallen lime, our host and family resumed their merry dance, and surprised us with their accurate time and graceful activity. How easy it is to see if the heart goes with the sport ! In our own country, I have sometimes been reminded of Bunbury's caricature of lumps of pudding : here it is quite another thing ; no lumps of pudding wade through their

elastic ranks, all is at once upon the stretch of pleasure, and though the figure and time are kept with perfect accuracy, yet they never appear as if these things had engaged their thoughts, so thoroughly absorbed are they in the pleasure they enjoy. They continued their sport till the last ray of the setting sun had quitted the summit of the adjacent hill, and at this signal of departed day, we were conducted to the cottage of our host, where we sat down with himself, two sons, and a handsome daughter, to enjoy a repast of fricaçeed fowl, salad, and wine. It was a lone house, but not a poor one; the farm was extensive, and I am glad of it, for its master would accept of no remuneration for the treatment we had received from him, but begged us to set it down as a debt to hospitality, which he was sure, he said, we should pay whenever called upon to do so. There was no disputing the point with one who could confer an obligation in a manner like this; so on taking leave in the morning, a lady, who was of our party, presented a garnet ring from her finger to the daughter of our host, as a testimonial of our obligation, adding, that she hoped another might soon be offered, more welcome, and not less sincere.

We had not realized indeed the expectation which we had formed on the preceding morning, as to the extent of our day's journey, but we had far surpassed it in adventures; we were gainers by the accident, as we had lost only a few miles of our distance, and found in compensation, the better feelings of the human heart, in beings who had otherwise continued strangers to us still. The novel incident engrossed our conversation, from our quitting this hospitable retreat, to our arrival at Pont St. Maxence, and would have continued to do so, had not the intense heat of the day put a stop for a while to our progress, and thrown us into an inn, where every thing is done in a different manner, to that which we had just experienced. But there is nothing to complain of on that account: to find hosts like our last is rare, and heaven in pity to such as stand in need of their assistance, has planted them at stated points, where most required, to house benighted travellers in distress: and one we found, just where we had no means to do without him. Thanks to that power, who has arranged all things for general good; that has given the glow-worm light, lest in his natural nightly wanderings, some unconscious foot should

come upon it. An Italian poet, whose name I forget, has a stanza on this subject, which is translated, (as well as my memory can prompt me) thus,

“ Who knows but thy refulgent ray
Was lighted up by God,
To bid the trav’ller on his way,
Be mindful where he trod.”

Having remained at Pont St. Maxence till the sun had a little declined, we proceeded on our journey; and without any further important incident, reached Senlis to dinner. Here we passed over the ground, on which the battle was fought against the Prussians by Grouchy and Vandamme, who after their retreat from Waterloo, made a stand here to defend the capital. The Guard Nationale, had just returned from a review on our entering the town, and perceiving we were English, they gave us our full share of their good-will in grins and maledictions: no unusual salutation indeed since our landing at Calais, but certainly the first military reception of this sort, that we had yet been greeted with. We slept at Senlis, and after breakfasting the following morning at Louvres, which is midway

between Senlis and Paris, we were ushered with all the rapidity, which the sanguine temperament, and active whip of our cocher could provoke our horses to, into this city of bustle,—this capital of pleasure!—or to borrow the enthusiastic spirit of a Parisian, into *le monde* ; and after all he is right, for I hardly think I had been in the world till then. To be in the world implies activity, since those who retire into scenes of solitude, are said to have given it up ; those who sleep, may be said to have retired awhile from it, because their activity is suspended ; and those who think much, are so frequently absent from it on that very account, that they too, may be considered rather as visitors, than residents in it. A Parisian, in his own city, forbids all such impediment to his activity, and feeling nothing to check his perpetual motion there, limits the world to the walls that surround him ; and who after this will dispute his right and title to the term ? I think I see you laugh at my leaving sleep out of the Parisian's catalogue of necessities, but I have not done so without a plausible reason for it, and this you will find as I go on.

The burning heat of the weather had been con-

stantly encreasing since our leaving Brussels, and on our entering Paris, it had reached its climax. In my life I never before experienced such intenseness ; there was not a breath of air, and the rays of the sun, which for the last week had been darting through a cloudless atmosphere, had by this time so heated their lofty stone houses, that on our entrance into the narrow inlets which they formed, we might have fancied we had mistaken our way, and were entering the crater of some burning volcano ; and the confusion of carts, fiacres, wooden shoes, drums, &c. in the streets of the faubourgs through which we passed ; together with the singing, music, bawling, laughing, and talking from the windows of almost every house in them at the same moment, only tended to encrease the illusion, and led us to imagine that the explosion had actually commenced ; and that the beings who were flying about in all directions, or bobbing their heads at the casements above us, were nothing more than the combustible matter which had been ejected, and had not yet exhausted the impetus which expelled it.

We, however, soon passed through this scene of inferior life, into one more splendid, but not less

stormy ; for be it understood, that whatever difference may exist, in other respects, between the high and the low, in this latter point they meet in eternal equality ; it thunders for ever through the palace, the hotel, the shop, and the hovel, with no other difference than the harmony or dissonance of the peal. After dodging about an hour between cart and carriage, and horse and foot passenger, none of which seem to have any defined or regular course in their unflagged streets, but rattle away helter skelter, through any accidental opening that may present itself, (as if in a constant crowd) we reached the Hôtel de Valois, in the Rue Richelieu. Did you ever feel in such a heat, that you would hardly have moved another step, to see a young duchess dressed for her first presentation ? If you have, you may feel some idea of my perplexity, leaving out all the confusion of a bewildered brain, in this new scene of action. After trotting up at least half a dozen distinct staircases, and to an enormous height too, (till heat and ill-humour had nearly overpowered us,) we suited ourselves with excellent apartments, and then sat down for a while to give the spirits time to rally, after this double exhaustion of mind and body. The lees of the tem-

per however soon subside here, within so pure an atmosphere, where neither smoke nor vapor clogs the respiration.

Having dressed ourselves and ordered dinner, we began to enquire about what we ought to have learned, before deciding on the place of our residence ; namely, how we were situated as to the places of amusement, curiosities, public buildings, operas, theatres, &c.; fortunately accident made amends for the neglect of forethought, and we found ourselves in the very centre of them all. We now sallied forth on foot, to take a promenade in the gardens of the Thuilleries, which were close at hand. I do not mean to give you a detailed description of these, nor would you, I am sure desire it, since it could be little else than a repetition of the same formal arrangement that I have given of the park at Brussels : the dress is precisely the same, but the cloth here is richer, and the ornaments more profuse, that's all. Having looked at one side attentively, if you suddenly turn to the other, you would conceive it a mirror reflecting what you had just seen. Such is the picture of the gardens of the Thuilleries : there is no allurements here to wan-

der, as in the sweet wilds of nature; on the contrary, all but a Frenchman turn away on first acquaintanceship, and never seek a more familiar footing; I never paid the place a second visit.

We now returned to dinner, and afterwards commenced settling the manner in which we should dispose of the time we meant to spend in this city. We had a letter of introduction to a family here, and through their kind means we were enabled to arrange this to our full satisfaction. Should you ever design to visit the continent, be sure and provide yourself with introductions: one, at least, is indispensable here, if you mean to see all that is worth observation, for in so large a place you would otherwise be at a great loss in regulating the order in which you should visit the different places, from want of local knowledge; and with a good arrangement, you will see as much in one month, as by a bad one you would be able to accomplish in three. We finished our evening discussion, with a resolution to make use of our introductory letter before we proceeded further, and breaking up the conclave we retired to rest.

Tour.

E

Having arrived in my chamber I found this impossible, at least for the present, as in the apartments adjoining mine there was a French party of four or five, from the sound of their voices, who were enjoying *La Danse en famille* to a well played violin; their mirth was at its height, for laughter at times, though it stifled the sounds of their instrument, could not stop the active measure of their limbs. Well, thought I, the storm is too violent and the flashes too frequent to last, it must soon be calm again; so I e'en undressed, and was going by music to bed, as, on my arrival at Calais, I had done to dinner;—there was something new in it, and I was a little diverted with the novelty notwithstanding my fatigue. By the time I had completed my work, and was on the point of dancing into bed, bounce opened a door which I conceived to be that of a closet belonging to my room, and a lady and gentleman made me a thousand apologies for the accidental intrusion: the fact was, that my suite of apartments communicated with another occupied by this merry party, and the *fille de Chambre* having forgot to bolt the barrier of division on my side, the party in question conceiving my rooms unoccupied as they had been before dur-

ing their stay, had as usual after their dance, it seems, thrown open this door for the benefit of air. In England, a lady under such a dilemma would have retired in silence; but in France, an apology must be made even to a man in his shirt, and the pardon was accorded with as much grace as a man who had never been taught to bow in such an attire, could be expected to display. I had no hat to aid the elegance of the movement, but, as if by instinct, I seized my night cap, which answered full as well, and actually bowed her to her room again. There was no alternative; to appear abashed whilst a lady can sustain the shock, would have been an unmanliness that I could not stoop to, and I think we all got through the business with considerable credit. I now bolted the door, and slipped into bed, quite tickled with the adventure, and for some time could not sleep for laughing at it. At length I gently glided into the vale of fiction, whose sweet groves have sheltered many a care-worn being, for a while at least, from the tempest of the Fates; and though the captive's chains are on him still, in thy embrace, oh Sleep! he is oft at large, rambling with those he loves in Freedom's boundless range. Be with

the wretched, sweet illusion ! when thou canst, and chequer sorrow's course with fancied joys : life is but short, yet thou mayest steal from it an hour or two from time to time, though grief be ne'er so watchful ; and what with thy bright dreams, and airy castles, care may be cheated of a thousand stings.

He who has been accustomed to a life at sea, and can sleep undisturbed in storm or cannonade, may manage matters here pretty well ; but on my life any other must become used by time to the racket of this city before he can. By two in the morning my sleep could stand the storm no longer, and bouncing out of bed as if startled by a dream, I was going to call out what's the matter ; but recollecting myself, I perceived it was nothing more than the perpetual motion, which, though I heard on going to bed, I had calculated like the bustle of other places, would have exhausted itself by midnight ;—but no, the motion here is perpetual indeed, and I am half inclined to believe, that the occupants of no house whatever in this place retire to rest at a stated hour, as in England, but that some sleep while others keep watch lest by any accident, silence should for

once prevail, and deprive the Parisians of some important charter. Their noise is as sacred to them as the pure fire (which was the voucher of their chastity) to the Vestals whose duty it was to watch that it might never be extinguished. On some occasions the latter have paid the forfeit of the neglected charge, but the former have never been found wanting, and I believe will maintain their privilege to the end of the chapter. Night and day here are much about the same thing, only that the sun lights the one and the moon the other.

I'll not give you the account of my observations or disposal of time while here, in the order of a journal, but without reference to dates lay before you my proceedings during the stay. We took a walk through the Place de Carrousel to the Seine, for the purpose of seeing the bridges, which are generally well built, and some of them only inferior to our best, because they have not such a river to cross as our Thames. The Seine is very narrow, and of but little interest to a resident of London, the river of which city, in every consideration of utility, so immensely surpasses it; but the Parisians have greatly the superiority in their open and spacious

quays, which form a handsome promenade on each side the Seine through the city ; but this is a benefit only to the general appearance of the town, while it proclaims the little commercial use that is made of it ;—however, as a coup d'œil it has decidedly the advantage over us. The Pont Neuf, though so called still, is by far the oldest bridge they have : there are stairs from this which lead to floating baths, of which there are several, and to floating laundries too, where the washing of a considerable part of the city is performed. I saw dozens of women at this work, which is not executed as with us—they substitute beating for rubbing, and as they have no other way of cleansing, they leave their faces unwashed for fear of hurting themselves ;—but this by the way is more for the joke than the truth, since I have seen full as many clean faces in Paris as in London, though by no means so pretty. From this bridge we had an extremely fine view of the exterior of the grand gallery of the Louvre. Having traversed the Pont Royal, the Pont des Arts, and the Pont Neuf, we went to the Place de Louvre, and saw as much as had been executed of the building projected by Napoleon, to correspond with the gallery I have mentioned, and thus to complete the square of which

the Palace of the Thuilleries forms a side ; but little had been done of this—his restless ambition led him to less tranquil projects, and his failure in these has consigned the other to neglect. A much grander work than this had been planned by him ; but from the same cause, has never gone beyond the projecting. It was a superb marble colonnade which was to have reached from the Thuilleries to the intended palace of the young King of Rome.

You have read in Rousseau's *Heloise* an account of the French Opera, and if your opinion has been formed in that school, your interest will be little excited, though you must expect I should say something on the subject. The house is large, but not of the oblong shape of that in London ; the front is nearer the stage, and the sides more removed from it, as at Drury Lane. A single chandelier, but of large dimensions, hanging from the centre of the house, is the only light in the audience part of it, and is quite sufficient for the original purpose of such an establishment, though not, perhaps, for the display of fashion and beauty, which is the most prominent consideration with an elegant London audience ; but this in Paris seems to have little

weight, unless with the English ladies, who dress there in all the extravagance of taste, and endeavour to out-do even their London out-doings. I never was more astonished than on my first entrance into this house. I had been led to expect so little decency, from the accounts I had so often heard in London of the extreme levity of French taste, particularly in dress, that I had prepared myself for a display, that would have suffused the cheeks of our least fastidious belles ; but on the contrary, Diana's self unblushing might behold them. Long sleeves, and dressed up to their very chins ; quite the extreme indeed ; but if a lady cannot keep the medium, it is laudable to deviate to the modest side.

In the front of the house, and immediately projecting from the low tier of boxes, are four rows of seats elevated considerably above the pit, and separated from each other by partitions ; these are not divided into distinct boxes, but are open like the pit through the whole extent, and pay the same price as the close boxes. As to the height of the house, you may form some idea from there being six tiers : the tout ensemble is handsome. The scenery is beautiful, and the machinery by which it

is moved admirable, for it is changed as if by magic: there is no moving from one side to the other as with us, but, as if a conjuror had blown upon it, the scene is changed and you cannot tell how. I wonder that our English theatres have not yet profited from this example; but some how or other we are so wedded to old customs and opinions, that like doating husbands towards their wives, we are loath to give them up, even after we have found them to be worthless; the dull old reason still—we have gone on well enough with what we have, our fathers didn't complain, and why should we? Something like the arguments used against Sir Samuel Romilly's reasons for proposing to revise certain parts of our criminal code;—but to resume. The orchestra is very full and grand; I did not count the number, but it appeared to me three times that of our own opera house. The time is admirably kept, but the music is thunder. The French appear to me to have no taste for the tender; there is nothing melting in their composition, nothing of the soft Italian stealing on the heart, and breathing love through all the yielding senses: the martial is their taste, and to the highest pitch their band can carry it, it always mounts. Two or three instruments

commence the overture, and as it proceeds, another and another join, till all have gradually combined their powers, and every head, that is not purely French, is split asunder.

“ Now strike the golden-lyre again,
And louder yet, and yet a louder strain;
Break his bands of sleep asunder,
And rouse him like a rattling peal of thunder.”

Their very lovers breathe their softest vows in martial strains, and were it not that their attitude speaks something of their feeling, all would be lost upon you, for their music breathes nothing but war. The ballet, however, is without fault, and not merely so, but it is full of perfection: the dancing is the finest in the world; no other country pretends to dispute the point with them; the whole corps are at the height of the profession, and it appears like a contest among themselves for the prize. There is nothing *à la mediocre* here, it is all complete, all perfect, nothing left to desire.

The next place we visited was the palace and gardens of St. Cloud, the road to which, through

the Bois de Bologne, is a charming drive, and near enough to Paris to allow of returning to dinner, after enjoying the beauties of the place, and seeing all worth notice in the neighbourhood. The king was at this palace, and in consequence we were not permitted to enter; but we found free admission into the gardens, which are beautiful, and were rendered more inviting because they were the only specimen of natural taste we had seen since our arrival on the continent. The scenery is diversified, and you may range through shady grove or gay promenade just as your fancy leads: there is nothing of Brussels park or the Thuilleries about it, to tire without exercise, or sicken with its sameness. Here, from the terrace, we had an admirable view of Paris, for St. Cloud is built on a hill, and commands a very extensive view of the country on that side.

Having spent about an hour at this place we proceeded to Sevres, which is close by, to see the manufactory of porcelain. Here we were highly gratified by the exquisite paintings on china, which are carried to such perfection that the price of a single cup and saucer of the first quality is—by-the-

by, the amount I was going to mention alarms me for the credit of my veracity, and as I may have confounded one sum with another, in order to be on the right side I'll say nothing about it for the present. There is a large circular table here of porcelain, the surface of which is most beautifully painted on separate compartments, displaying all the royal palaces of France, with the grounds attached to them. This was for the king, and no price was affixed to it, nor was it necessary there should be, since the monarch here is at the head of all the manufactories, and has nothing to pay, I understand, for such produce of them as he may require for his own use. I do not admire this mode of regulating things. Here, if a man by labour or ingenuity has produced something of public advantage, he has not that benefit which would have accrued to him in England; on the contrary, the state takes the management into its own hands, defrays all the expenses, and receives all the produce of the sales. No doubt the ingenuity of those who have invented or discovered, is rewarded; but this mode of arrangement does not accord with my notions of justice. I am indeed tempted on that very account to suspect that my informant may have been too ge-

neral in his application of this law of France, and that it may relate only to particular manufactures, and to those too only under peculiar circumstances. I will inform myself, however, on this head from some other source. We now returned to Paris to a late dinner.

On the following day, (Sunday) we went to hear the high mass at the great church of Notre Dâme, and took our station in the lofty stone gallery immediately over the sanctuary. We had been led to expect a great treat of music, and I judged that the effect would be greatly improved by our elevated distance. We were near enough, however, to the altar, to see distinctly the solemn ceremony, and waited the commencement of it with anxious anticipation. The moment at length arrived and twenty-four priests, in vestments, with a suitable train of attendants, entered the sanctuary, and after performing a part of the service, they moved in holy procession with torches and incense, chanting hymns through all the aisles of this extensive edifice. During the performance of this ceremony a small band, consisting of two violins, a flute, French horn, and violoncello, entered the sanctuary, and the priests

having returned, the mass commenced to the very worst music I had ever heard.

In a country where the population is almost entirely catholic, it was natural to expect that their most ancient, and grandest church, would have been crowded ; but I found the officiating body as numerous as their congregation. This apathy to religion which is to be found amongst the present race of Frenchmen, whose fathers, but yesterday as it were, had kissed the rod of clerical power, is a melancholy proof how closely infidelity treads to the heels of bigotry. The revolution extinguished the flame of religion in the blood of the purest of its pastors, whose holy zeal forbad them to abandon their post, even in the midst of the destroying hurricane. The less zealous, whose piety could not arm them with the requisite courage to perish in the cause, fled from their trust, and abandoned the field to the havock of blasphemy and abomination ; for the rest of the clergy soon yielded to the existing state of things, setting the horrible example to their country, of the very ministers of religion denying its efficacy, and remaining in it, to impress on the rising generation, that devotion was mockery, and that they

kept up the appearance of it only so long as it had been profitable to them ; and of this latter body, the chief were those who, prior to the revolution, had by a too rigid execution of their power and authority, helped to grind the people into that condition of misery, which warranted the appeal they made against oppression, though nothing could justify the atrocities which followed it. With only such apostate priests remaining amongst them, how was it to be expected that the present race of France should have much religion ? I am, however, wandering from my object : I am talking politics to a lady, which is out of character at any time, and to do so when she expects nothing but the narrative of a Tour, might be considered impertinent, were it not that good nature knows how to pardon the wanderings into which my subject may sometimes allure me.

I thought at the immense elevation in which we had taken our seats, that we were secure from interruption, for so far below was the ceremony performing, that we beheld it as through an opera glass reversed ; but I was mistaken, for the churches are poor now, whatever they once had been, and ne-

cessity will find its way through the obstacles of toil and intricacy ; the first, at least, of which must be encountered before our position could be stormed. A priest himself did us the honour to crave our mite to the support of the clergy, and there was no putting off so important a personage with a trifle. We had paid for our seats on entering, but that was for the wear and tear of the inanimate part of the establishment only. We parted on good terms with our visitor, and took a drive on the Boulevards to sharpen our appetites for dinner, and after that we took a walk about the Palais Royal, and that part of the city nearest our hotel.

On the following morning we ordered the carriage early, in order to see as much as possible south of the Seine ; we were accompanied by a gentleman of the family to whom our letter had introduced us, and through whom we found the greatest facilities in our visits to the curiosities and public places of Paris.

Our first point this day was the Champ de Mars, which is a large open space with the military college at the southern extremity. It was here that Napo-

leon held the Champ de Mai after his return from Elba ; from this we proceeded to L'Hôtel des Invalides, the establishment of which is on a similar principle with our Chelsea College : but here you see, what I believe is never the case at the latter, commissioned officers, and some of high rank too, subsisting on the allowances of it ; but their table is of course superior, and their apartments suitable to their condition in life. When we consider the vast number of officers in the French army, who have risen purely by merit from the ranks, we may easily conceive the frequent want of means to provide for themselves, when rendered incapable of service from wounds or sickness. Pensions are allowed to them as in England if they choose to accept them, in preference to the Hotel ; but they are inadequate, unless aided by private property, which, for the reasons I have stated, the officers in France are very deficient in. I had some conversation with one of them, and found him an extremely intelligent man : he had fought in the battles of Marengo, Austerlitz, Friedland, &c., and had served through the disastrous Russian campaign, and subsequently at Leipsig, where he received the wound which consigned him to this place ; he was a colonel ; and

Tour.

F

from his energetic manner, and description of the battles I have mentioned, it was easy to see, that his hard lot had not in the least diminished his love for the profession. Of what different materials (or whatever else it may be) are the minds of men formed; that while one is toiling with no other object than to procure ease and retirement in the vale of years, another regrets that the wounds he has received, through a life of constant danger, have deprived him of the power to continue his desperate career!

Having seen all connected with the domestic part of the establishment, we visited the chapel. At the commencement of the revolution, the democrats broke into it, while the priests were celebrating high mass; the chief of whom they sacrificed at the altar, and the others who had fled for safety to the top of the building, they pursued and hurled headlong into the chancel, where they expired. I'll not however shock you by repetitions of these heart-rending atrocities, of which almost every public building in Paris has been the scene, and which were I to enumerate, would throw a frightful horror over the narrative, and infuse a melancholy in it,

which, as my object is to inspire pleasure, I should be studious to avoid. The interior of the dome of this Hotel is very beautiful, and the tessellated pavement under it is considered a masterpiece of workmanship. The exterior of the dome is gilt ; which does not strike me as adding any thing to its beauty, and only serves, at a great expense, to distinguish it unnecessarily from the other buildings, on a distant view of the city.

I cannot here refrain from observing, that I have not the talent to enter into that detailed and accurate description, which the public works of a great and splendid city may fairly demand : books have been written in which justice, no doubt, has been done to them all ; and I have not the vanity to think I could equal them, nor the wish, if I could, to do over again what is sufficient, when well done once. For accurate accounts on this head, I must refer you to other pens than mine, and solicit your indulgence when I lay before you my cursory observations ; I write to you in the style of our domestic chit-chat, fearless of criticism, as when, over our wine or tea, we have provoked discussion on subjects without previous consideration of them. I am

hurrying through Paris, because I can do nothing deliberately in it ; and I have so much to do in so little time, that I am obliged to press it on, like the pageant of a Roman triumph, which has enough to employ a week, but must by law be finished in a single day. I am become through example, or the air and wine of the place, quite a Parisian in activity, for I hardly know how to sit still, though literally stewed with the heat of the weather.

We visited the Chamber of Deputies, and the Palace of the Luxembourg, in which the chamber of Peers is held ; and here, in spite of the trembling of our guide, at the indignity offered to his country, I actually took possession of the Throne of France, and placed my foot upon the stool below it ; but I issued no edict, and the usurpation remains a profound secret to all in France, but our agitated conductor. We next proceeded to the gallery of this palace, and saw several paintings by David Vizt. Brutus after the execution of his sons :—this is taken just at that moment, when having witnessed the execution of his sentence on his own children, and left Collatinus, his colleague, to see justice done on the other conspirators, he enters the room

where his wife and daughter, who had just heard the event, are in the last extremity of silent agony : the subject is dreadful, but the sentence was just ; and however savage the deed may appear on a superficial view of it, yet I decidedly agree with Plutarch, for whose opinion I refer you to the life of Publicola. The oath of the Horaces by the same artist ; also the Remorse of Orestes ; the Flight of Cain ; the Revolt of Cairo during Napoleon's command in Egypt ; the Descent from the Cross ; and several others of various merit, which are the works of pupils of David. We now recrossed the Seine, and went to see the grand bronze column in the Place Vendôme ; this monument was erected to commemorate the several victories gained by Napoleon, and is formed entirely from the cannon taken in battle. Round this column from the pedestal to the capital, are twenty-one compartments, on which the artist has emblematically expressed the various exploits of this extraordinary man ; the explanatory detail, however, which was once on the pedestal, is cut away—to obliterate, I suppose, the recollection of what the monument itself is still left to perpetuate ; the N's and the Bees are chiselled off most of the works erected by Napoleon, with the same

view. How shallow is this policy, when it is recollected, that a man may be as well remembered by his misfortunes, as by his glory; and the disfiguring of the buildings will be as lasting a memento of the motive for doing it, as the N's and Bees could have been of the Emperor who built them.

In the evening we went to the Café des Mille Colonnes. Before I enter into the particulars of this place, it will be proper to give you some idea of Parisian customs, respecting what in England would be called domestic economy. A very large portion of the families of this city spare themselves the trouble and inconvenience of a kitchen establishment, and seek their repasts at Restaurateurs and Cafés, where every thing to gratify a French taste is always ready at command; and a French lady, however high her rank, thinks nothing of entering the public dinner-room, crowded with visitors of various descriptions, but seats herself promiscuously at any vacant place, and falls to with as much sang-froid as you would do at your own table. Society is every thing here, domesticity nothing: every hour that is not passed in public, is a blank in the Parisian's existence; and he is as cautious to

avoid privacy, as if it were pregnant with infection, and the harbinger of death: the public breakfast, the public dinner, the public café, the dance, the play, the opera, and the midnight walk on the Boulevards—oh! this is life! at least a Frenchman's life, who shrugs his shoulders at the lazy hour of sleep, that steps in here to stop his otherwise unceasing round of pleasure.

The Café is a place, as its name implies, at which coffee is drank, and where liqueurs, ice, and such sort of refreshments are sold. I would not be in Paris, and miss seeing the beauty, who presides at the Café des Mille Colonnes, for the world, as she had been so much talked of; indeed I was a little selfish, even beyond the gratification of my curiosity, for what would you have said to me, if on my return to London, I could have given you no idea of the Parisian Venus?

A large room, handsomely ornamented with pillars, is made to appear like a perpetual gallery, by the mirrors which cover the entire sides of it, and thus present to the view an immense extent of columns; hence the title of the place. At one side of

this magic illusion, is a handsome marble slab, resting on supporters of the appearance of bronze; and here, on a chair of state, presides the genius of the place.—

A diamond crescent decorates her brow,
And rows of pearl divide her ebon hair;
The verdant emerald clasps her slender zone,
And orient sapphires on her bosom play.

I should be getting into heroics, were I to allow myself to be carried away by such accumulated charms; I think I hear you exclaim, what pretty selection has he been making from the Arabian Nights' Tales? I forgive you if you do, for I was myself nearly impressed with the idea of a vision when I entered the place:—extravagance apart, she was dressed in splendid attire, richly ornamented with diamonds and pearls, and actually presided, as I have observed, with the apparent view indeed of taking the money, which the company paid to the waiters; but this she could have done in neat attire, at least as well. The actual object was to attract custom, and bring tout le mōnde to see the beauty, which she certainly was not, though by no means plain. The purpose is answered, for the

Café is constantly filled in the evenings ; and from being the poor wife of a half-pay officer, she has by this means contrived to make the condition of both independent, at least I am so informed. She complained much, I understood, of the incivility of the English, who took every opportunity of turning her into ridicule : I thought proper to stand the champion of my country on this occasion, and got into conversation, that I might impress her with some notion at least of its politeness ; for I would not allow even the mistress of a Café, in a rival kingdom, to suppose that we were wanting in such an essential as good manners. Many of our countrymen, who know well enough how to conduct themselves in the society of their superiors and equals, are very prone to relax in civility when amongst their inferiors ; bringing their own class into disrepute, exactly where, for the quiet of society, it is most desirable they should secure respect, and show by their deportment that they have a better title to their rank in life, than the mere accident of having been born to it.

“ Enough unto the day is the evil thereof,” and enough unto this had been the business and exercise

of it; and I must take this occasion of quitting my subject for a time, as I then did my fatigue, to renovate my spirits and recruit my tired pen, that it may be enabled to resume the narrative with just that interest which at first inspired it; my exhausted taper scarcely glimmers in the socket, and but gives me just light enough to say good night.

LETTER V.

Paris.

MY last concluded with our visit to the Café des Mille Colonnes, after a day full of business. On the following morning, we went to see the foundations which had been laid for the palace of the young King of Rome ; but I am so little conversant in architecture, that though I saw the plan of the intended building, I could form no correct idea of what its appearance would have been, if finished ; you will not be so unreasonable, I am sure, after this, to expect any account of it.

Our next visit was to the Church of St. Sulpice, which has nothing remarkable in it to warrant my taking up your time by any attempt at description ; I was pleased, however, that we went there just at the time we did, as a marriage ceremony was then commencing, and up to that moment I had never been a witness of one. The ceremony, as to substance, must be pretty much the same in all Christian countries, and it would be quite superfluous in me to draw any picture of the scene for one already

married ; I mean as to forms and protestations ; but as every marriage varies in some degree, as to its effect on all but the parties concerned, it may not be so unacceptable, if I attempt to give you some idea of the happy pair ; for happy I must think they are, who possess so easy a turn of temper and taste, as to be pleased with each other, though totally wanting even in the shadow of a charm to make them interesting to any besides. Three-score years and ten is the scriptural limit to the life of man ; yet nothing daunted on the very verge of it, our tottering Paris, in a suit of salmon-coloured satin fringed with gold, leads forth his blushing Helen, ripe in the bloom of three and sixty summers : the northern winds, 'tis true, had had their turn, and sapped the juice and shrivelled up the rind ; but what of that ? the fruit had kept the tree, and fate, which rules o'er wedlock, could not bring the proper hand to pluck it, till life was in its twilight ; her Paris had been ranging distant realms, while Helen's charms had withered quite away. I hope the destinies don't often play these scurvy tricks upon the sex ; for our new bride had nothing but the wrinkles of age and disappointed hope, to spoil a face originally good, and which forty years before

would have inspired an interest in the beholders, equal at least to the ridicule which it now provoked.

We now drove to the Jardin des Plantes, or Botanical Garden, and here we also saw the wild beasts and birds: the lion is much larger and handsomer than that at the Tower of London. I have little to say of my observations here, my knowledge in botany being very circumscribed, and a minute detail of the wild beasts would be no very interesting subject to a lady; I shall hurry therefore from this place to the grand Elephant Fountain, which is situated on the north side of the Seine, on the precise spot where the Bastile once stood. It was planned by Napoleon, for the purpose of supplying the city of Paris with soft water, which, at present, the inhabitants are obliged to purchase by measure of carriers who vend it about the streets. This, if completed, would have been one of the most important improvements to the city: the water was to have been forced by machinery from the canal de l'Ourcq, at several leagues distance; which, on its arrival at the fountain, was to form a grand jet d'eau, and thence proceed through different chan-

nels into the town. The model of the elephant in plaster of Paris is complete, and a figure from this, in bronze, of fifty-four feet in height, was to have rested on a grand marble pedestal ; but since the abdication, little or nothing has been done to it. Public spirit is entirely at a stand, and I should not be surprised if this grand work were to fall to the ground, for want of the projector ; like some other vast undertakings, which demanded the same genius to complete, that it had required to plan.

In the evening we went to the Theatre François. The audience part is constructed in the horse-shoe form ; and from the low tier of boxes, sloping towards the pit, is a range of seats similar to those at the Opera House ; the rest of the boxes are, in every sense of the word, suitable to the term they bear ; they are literally boxes, having no communication from their sides with one another, but merely an opening in front resembling a window without sashes ; the two tiers above these are formed by columns running up the extent of both, and the spaces between them are the boxes, which are separated in the interior by green partitions ; these columns support another tier, similar to the lower

one, and which is surmounted with other pillars supporting the dome : it is little more than half the size of Drury-lane, and consequently much better adapted for seeing and hearing : it is lighted, in the audience part, in the same manner as their Opera House, with a single chandelier. The performances were Racine's tragedy of Esther, and the comedy of the Absent Man.

Tragedy is not the forte of the French ; they are totally mistaken in themselves on this point : their great fault is, that in whatever they undertake they insist upon it they excel ; and by so doing, they are frequently claiming admiration even for their very absurdities. The grimace of a French tragedian is truly alarming ; by the time of the catastrophe, he has worked it up to such a fearful pitch, that just as he is going to stab himself, you are doubtful whether the tortures of the colic will not be beforehand with the knife, and close the scene rather in vinegar than blood. His grand effective point, in his own conceit, is the climax to which the tone of his voice is carried by his overwhelming agony ; for, beginning on the treble key of a little girl endeavouring to suppress her tears, he gradually works

it up with increasing grimace, until it has arrived at the bellowing of an enraged Stentor; and all this is done in the gradations of an octave, till an English auditor would be in alarm, lest the overcharge of woe should blow the hero into a thousand atoms.

The comedian, however, is quite another personage as to merit. As if nature had nothing to do with the agonies of the mind, the school of tragedy has laid down rules for every movement and tone of voice in the delineation of them; while the buoyant spirits are left at their own disposal, as the peculiar favorite of nature, enjoying all her interest, and as it were spontaneously delighting all within sight and hearing. The truth is, that gaiety may safely be left at the mercy of the French; they are all masters of it, from the foundation to the pinnacle; but melancholy, despair, and all the gloomy passions, are known to them only by name: to be without hope, is a condition of mind which the Frenchman has yet to learn the feeling of, and to enable him to give any thing like a picture of it, he must be schooled; for though nature has charged him from the toe to the crown with mirth and

laughter, she has not spared him from her stores of grief a single tear.

On the following morning we took an early breakfast, because we had allotted to ourselves sufficient business for a long day. The morning was beautiful, and the scene enchanting, through which we passed to the Château of Malmaison, once the residence of the amiable Josephine ; here, prior to her divorce, she had spent much of her time, and here the Emperor Napoleon when oppressed with the burthen of state, had often found in her calm bosom a solace for the cares of his ambition. Since the divorce, indeed, she had never quitted the place, but like a recluse had remained shut up within the walls of it : she had caused a chateau to be erected on the brow of a hill, just beyond her park, as a residence for Prince Eugene Beauharnois, her son ; and it was her intention to have extended the boundary of her demesne, so as to have enclosed the new residence, but the abdication of Napoleon delayed the execution, till death, which soon followed, closed the scene on all her hopes and her misfortunes.

Tour.

G

The French adore the memory of Josephine, and will even stop in the midst of their enthusiastic details of the exploits of Napoleon, to censure him for the cruelty of the divorce ; and considered in a moral sense, it justly merited their abhorrence ; but Emperors and Kings depend less on the virtue, than the policy of their measures, and Josephine, with that disinterestedness which had distinguished her through life, made the painful sacrifice of her happiness and importance, to fix the throne of her consort on a firmer foundation.

The constant wars in which Napoleon was engaged, rendered his death no improbable event, and the land proprietors and monied interest of France were restless for the settlement of his succession, in order to secure property in its then existing channel. There was no issue by Josephine, nor any probability that there would be ; his victories in Austria presented a favorable opportunity to treat for an alliance, and though ambition, and perhaps a hankering after an union with one of the old families of Europe, may have had much weight with the Emperor, yet he had some excuse in the insecurity

of the succession to his own family, and the anxiety of France that he should have an heir. Josephine saw precisely the state of things, and preferring his glory to her own peace, resigned her title to his person and his throne.

Oh what a change since their first acquaintance ! An officer in the Republican army, distinguished by his abilities, becomes enamoured of her, from the admiration with which she contemplated his rising fame ; the passion was mutual, and they were united ; she watches with anxiety the progress of his fortunes, and follows them, till they had reached the pinnacle of glory ; and here, on the dizzy height to which he carried her, is she left alone and desolate ! She did not sink from her exalted station ; the splendor of the empress, indeed, forsook her, for that belonged to the palace, and not to her retirement ; but the dignity remained, for that was her own. She lived long enough to see the downfall of those fortunes under other auspices, which had flourished under hers ; but this was no source of exultation to her ; she saw the decline of his power with the deepest regret, but she had no second sacrifice to make for his preservation : she

had the mortification to feel the uselessness of her first, and perhaps the painful reflection, that the very means adopted, at so great a cost, for his security, had only assisted to accelerate his fall; for by his union with the house of Austria he had weakened his interest with the republican party, who, as they could not have the free government they wished, were, at least, extremely anxious to keep the new dynasty unmixed with the blood of any of the old reigning families of Europe.

The scene has however now closed upon the fortunes of Josephine, the ebbing and flowing of its tide are over, and she is placed, at length, beyond the reach of its vicissitudes.

Her taste was not French, neither in the arrangement of her house nor her gardens; it was too pure for the gaudy nothingness, which is constantly found in what are considered the best houses in Paris and its vicinity. Her gallery of paintings, which is beautiful, contains a fine marble statue of herself, which is considered a great likeness, and of which, I have no doubt, from its strong resemblance to a painting of her, which we saw in another part of

the chateau ; she must have been an extremely graceful woman in person, and her face, though not what would be called handsome, was, according to these portraits, exceedingly fascinating : there is a certain *je ne sais quoi* about it, in my opinion, which far surpasses all the tameness of regular beauty that is without that indescribable accompaniment.

We now visited the chambers, and saw that in which she and the emperor used to sleep ; it is very superb, but not large ; the bed of it is extremely handsome. This room had never been used by her since the separation, but as if sacred to their union, had become useless on their divorce. We next visited the chamber which had been occupied by her since the other had been given up ; it was merely neat and clean ; it had nothing of state about it, and was no doubt so arranged by her to suit the private station into which imperial policy had returned her.

We next rambled over the gardens, which are well laid out, but evidently running into disorder from neglect. In the piece of water which runs

through the grounds, we saw the beautiful black swans of which she was so fond ; she had been accustomed to feed them with her own hands, and they regularly came sailing towards the bank on seeing any persons approach, in hopes of food ; but the fair hand of their mistress had now forsaken them, she had left the place for a still calmer residence, and as if they read as much in every stranger's eye that looked at them, they would retrace their course, murmuring, in melancholy music, the dirge of their lost friend.

She was particularly fond of botany, and spent much of her time among her plants, of which she had a most valuable and rare collection ; her tenderness was romantic, for her gardener told me that she could not bear to see him pruning them ; as if they were animate and suffered from their wounds, she would frequently exclaim, oh ! my poor plants !—however extravagant this may appear, and I admit it is so, yet I cannot but love the sensitive heart whence it issues—it is an excess of the right feeling, and makes no one unhappy but the gentle possessor of it ; it is however too refined, too subtle, and makes the pain we feel for the grief of others

greater, even than what they suffer for themselves : there are but few who have such hearts, and as if it were a sin to have them, they are seldom happy ; it is easy to see *why* this is, but perhaps impossible to discover the justice since we cannot see the crime.

She was collecting materials to form a cabinet of natural curiosities, which would have been attached to her plant house, but she did not live to accomplish it, and the interest for continuing the work had ceased with the projector of it ; excepting, indeed, what the encroachment of time, and the undermining of neglect had been doing ; every thing about her chateau and grounds remained as she had left them. Proposals had been made to Prince Eugene by the reigning family, for the purchase of Malmaison, but he loved the memory of his mother too well to listen to them, and the property is still in his own hands.

We had become too much interested in the place to bid it the usual farewell of casual visitors, so plucking some leaves from an evergreen, that shaded a little temple of Cupid, we deposited them in

our pocket books, as sacred to her memory ; and left the place with those sensations of melancholy interest, which the misfortunes of so amiable a mind could not fail to inspire. Peace to thy gentle spirit ! In the elysium where thou dwellest, thou hast found thy proper home at last ; thy companions are congenial, and thy repose unceasing. I could not withdraw my eyes from the spot, till the turn of the road closed the view of the chateau, and here I exclaimed (as had once been done, in a melancholy mood, by him in whom all her affections had centred)—Adieu Malmaison !

We proceeded to St. Germain, but our minds were too much absorbed in our late gloomy visit, to allow of much attention to passing objects. There is something so dreary in reflecting on the grief which has burnt itself out ; I do not mean that which has been exhausted by time or circumstance, but that which makes the heart its fuel, and at last goes out because it has no more to burn. There is something so dreary in contemplating this, that I am persuaded had she been alive, under all the influence of hopelessness and sorrow, I should not have felt half the painful sensation

which the cure of death impressed me with. While there is life, however great the suffering, we do not see the total impossibility of removing the cause of pain, and setting all right again ; or by turning the mind to some unlooked-for joy, obliterate the recollection of that which has been lost ; but when death has closed the scene, the intenseness of the affliction stares full upon us ; we see that the victim of sorrow had no other remedy, that the iron grasp of misery had never relaxed, that there was no anodyne but death, no place of repose but the grave.

On our arrival at St. Germain we ordered dinner, and then went to visit the palace, which, in its zenith, had received the kings of France through many reigns, when they went to enjoy the diversion of hunting over the forest of Laye, in which the town is built ; but like the princes it had once received, its splendor, too, and gaiety have passed away, and it now stands but as the tomb-stone to its departed grandeur. The last sound of its revelries has long since ceased to vibrate through its halls, and the corroding breath of time is crumbling all away. The owl and bat now keep quiet possession.

where monarchs once presided,—“*sic transit gloria mundi.*”

The wood and park of this place is exceedingly pleasant, and the view of the forest from the terrace is very fine; here we rambled about till dinner time, as there was nothing else about the place to engage our attention. On returning to our inn we passed the house where poor Mrs. Jordan died; you no doubt remember the newspapers giving an account of her death, and observing, that the mourners at her funeral were merely accidental; that two Englishmen, who happened to be passing the spot at the time the corpse was carried out for interment, followed her to the grave. What a melancholy summing up of all her influence over the human heart! for more than thirty years, she had enchanted her country with her delightful display of all the livelier passions of our nature: how many thousands in such a period must her vivacity have beguiled, for a time at least, of their tears and afflictions; unable from infirmity any longer to please, she retires from the scene without a solace for her own, and steals in melancholy silence, unattended by offspring or friend, into a foreign grave. I pre-

tend not to look into causes for this bitter conclusion ; she had undoubtedly been liberal to others ; and with all her numerous progeny, her eyes should not have been closed by strangers, nor her body consigned to the grave without a tear.

In our excursion to-day we were accompanied by the sister of the gentleman to whom (as I have already observed) we were so much indebted for the facilities afforded us in our visits to the several public places in Paris ; she is a fine young creature, a native of Normandy, which boasts the handsomest women of France ; you will not feel your pride offended if I add, that in form and face the women of this province bear more resemblance to the ladies of our country than to those of the other parts of their own. There is an amiable disinterestedness about her, amounting even to self-devotion, which compels you to esteem her heart, while you question her prudence. Her affections had been gained by a young French officer, who had signalised himself under Napoleon, and such is the ardor of her love for him, that though without fortune on either side, yet is she determined on their union in spite of all the reasoning which her family have urged

against it; and what adds to the interest of this affair is, that she is importuned by a rich merchant of Paris, who, of *course*, has all the good wishes of the more prudent heads of the family : but I am much mistaken if single-handed love will not prove more than a match for even this powerful phalanx. Oh love! though doomed to a perpetual infancy, yet art thou strong enough where'er thou strikest, to bring thy votary down; no shield can stay the arrow thou hast sped, and many a dart of thine lies rankling in the wounds thou hast made, from thy most wanton and capricious freaks. From all I have learnt of the sincere attachment of these lovers, I cannot but feel extremely interested about them. There is something however so inadmissible in an union without property on either side, that notwithstanding the influence of love may be strong enough to overmatch the phalanx marshalled on the side of the merchant, yet it will not be able to conquer the more formidable arm of poverty which must forbid the union. Their passion therefore can only tend to her affliction and his reproach : for he

Had follow'd pleasure upon heedless wings,
Gath'ring the blossoms from fair fortune's tree,

And sipp'd the sweet dew from her opening buds :
And now the season for the fruit is come,
The ripening sun but darts his rays in vain ;
The shady leaves but hide their barren stems,
And autumn soon will come to shake them off,
And show the fruitless branches that are left.

Unfortunately for both, the death of his father, long before he became acquainted with her, left him, at a too inexperienced age, in possession of considerable property, and being of a lively turn of mind, he fell into a society that taught him to dissipate it without once dreaming of the future happiness which his folly was even then destroying.

On the following day we visited the Louvre : my mind had been prepared for the grandeur of this place, from the effect which the first view of it had on an acquaintance of ours, who is a great judge, you know, and admirer of the fine arts, and who had seen it in its zenith, when adorned with the finest works of the world in sculpture and painting. The effect on him spoke more, as to its overpowering splendor, than all the volumes which have been written upon it : the sudden burst upon his classical sight of such an assembly of the greatest heroes

of ancient Greece and Rome, the dignity of whose aspects might for the moment impress one with all their living influence, completely subdued him, and he actually fainted away. Who could see the benignant, yet inflexible brow of Cato, and not remember him at Utica, when the last struggle for his country had failed, and his resolution fixed not to outlive its liberty? who would not remember, that though determined on death himself, he never, to the very moment of it, relaxed in his exertions for the benefit of others; and having resisted in vain the torrent of rebellion till driven back to the very verge of liberty he sunk, because he would not be carried by the impetuous tide one wave beyond it? who can think of this, and not feel the thrill that checks the current of the blood in its progress to the heart? and if the sudden presence of one great hero can do this, what must the influence be, when the whole elysium of them appear at once before you, when all the virtue, wisdom, heroism of the ancient world is brought together, as it were, in one assembly of all that is dignified and great? Our visit however to this splendid gallery was not likely to be productive of the effect I have mentioned; there had been sad havoc since that,

and many a solitary niche remains, and vacant pedestal, with nothing but the names of the departed heroes who had filled them, and who had thus suffered, as it were, a second mortality, for they had lived first in nature, and then scarcely less animate in art, but they were now dead to both,—at least as their deserted pedestals would seem to imply.

There are many pieces of sculpture still remaining, but almost all the finest works are restored to the countries from which they had been taken by the conquests of Napoleon. There is scarcely less reduction in the Gallery of Paintings, but more remains here of the great works, than in the other; for there are many of the paintings of Raphael, Guido, Leonardo da Vinci, Poussin, Le Brun, &c. The paintings in the Gallery for living artists, are but sad vouchers for the talents of the modern school; they appeared to me little better than daubs, and in some instances, inferior to the signs on many of the shops of this city.

We now proceeded to the Museum of Tombs;

this is the place in which the monuments of the dead are deposited, which the exertions of M. Lenoir had preserved from the ravages of the revolution; they had been taken out of the several churches in the night time, and secreted in the monastery of Les petits Augustins, where they escaped the fury of the Sans-culottes, who could bear nothing which commemorated the great or learned; and into whose destroying hands they would inevitably have fallen, had they been left within the walls of the churches, against which these infuriated levellers denounced their heaviest vengeance. These works of art had been placed in their new depository with the greatest order and ingenuity, for M. Lenoir had arranged them according to the centuries in which they had been executed; so that, on visiting the place, we had only to pass from room to room, observing the gradual improvement in the art from the eleventh century upwards; the inspection of which must be exceedingly interesting to the artist and connoisseur.

Without going into a detail of what we saw at this place, which consisted chiefly of a long line of

kings and their common place eulogy,—I may be allowed to rescue one monument from the monotonous list, and pay the tribute of a tear to the memory of two lovers, over whose misfortunes the tide of seven hundred years has rolled, without washing the remembrance of their sorrows away. There is little to rouse our sympathy in contemplating the splendour of crowns, or the ambition of the heads which wore them; we may thrill, indeed, at the exploits of glory,—or shudder at the wanton ravages of merciless power;—but there is nothing here which comes home to the common feelings of our nature;—the victory is gained,—the pageant of the triumph has passed by,—and with the last flourish of trumpets, the interest of the scene expires. But 'tis not so with those incidents to which all mankind, whatever their condition, are liable to become the parties; and here, through the sympathy of our nature, are we brought to weep at the misfortunes of love, and to feel all that chilling blight which struck the hearts of Abelard and Eloisa, even in the infancy of their passion, with scarcely less bitterness upon our own. The tomb of these unhappy lovers was taken to pieces at the time we saw it at this museum, in order

Tour.

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to be re-erected at the cemetery of Père Le Chase, to which place their remains had been already removed. Seven hundred years ago, when full of youth and beauty, and full of interest too, from the story of their loves, they were yet unable to procure for themselves, even the calm possession of each other ; but now, when nothing but their dust remains, and the spirits which once informed it, are placed beyond the care of what the world may do with it, see what a host of pains is taken to keep them both together !

We had hitherto deferred visiting Versailles ; we were anxious to see the grand display of fountains with which the gardens of that splendid palace abound, and we could not have been gratified had we made our excursion sooner ; we proceeded thither on the following Sunday, and having ordered dinner at l'Hôtel de France, we went to view this ultimatum of the sublime and beautiful of the French school ; and I must confess they have some reason for the extravagant admiration which they bestow on this scene of Fairy Land. Ingenuity has been exhausted in its construction,

and though it presents nothing but studied order, and regular corresponding beauty in all its parts—totally without those spontaneous charms which the wildness of nature is constantly throwing in her delightful pathway,—yet is it arranged in such splendour of style, and total disregard of cost, that its very magnificence covers all the imperfections of its taste.

In these gardens I discovered the reason for my utter contempt of those of Brussels and the Thuilleries; the latter are mere affectations of what Versailles really is, and I felt in the comparison that sort of sensation which the low and uneducated have inspired me with, in the awkward affectation of their superiors; their dress resembling in every thing but the costliness, and their deportment and look, in every thing but the grace and dignity. I am not partial to the taste, however, be it as savory as it may, but this is, after all, the only way to make it palatable. Almost every walk leads to a splendid Jet d'Eau—not to the spouting of a little ill-shaped Cupid through a penny trumpet, as at Brussels; but to a fountain rushing in columns of crystal through a hundred mouths, to such a height, that the water

returns like mist into its spacious reservoir,—a receptacle worthy of the grandeur of the display, for it is bordered with a rich embankation of marble work, supporting a number of highly ornamented bronze vases of great solidity, and proportionably large to the fountain they encompass. The figures in the centre, from whence the waters issue, are finely wrought, and are emblematical of various river subjects. Conceive to yourself, for a moment, fountains of this magnitude, playing at the same time in every direction to which the eye is turned; fancy to yourself the sound from the fall of so many waters whispering through a hundred avenues, embellished with marble statues of the Gods and Heroes of antiquity; on one side a beautiful orangery which scatters its fragrance through the whole Elysium, and on another a palace, the extent and beauty of which, would be too great for every thing but the magic land which it surveys: look at all this in your mind's eye, and let it wander from slope to slope down the beautiful marble steps which lead from one to the other, and you will form (if extravagant in fancy) some faint idea of the enchantment of the place. The waters which play in these grounds are supplied from Marly, and forced by machinery

through immense pipes to a distance of nine miles.

The interior of the palace is exceedingly grand, particularly in the saloons, which are named after certain of the Heathen Deities, and painted by the first masters, with subjects suitable to the title they bear. A servant in the royal livery conducts the visitor through the several apartments, to whom it is customary, though not necessary, to present a few franks for his trouble.

We saw the chamber in which Louis the Fourteenth died; and also the room in which he used sometimes to work, for he was fond of mechanics, and would frequently amuse himself in that pastime, when unengaged in his more delightful occupation of war. There is a private theatre and opera in this palace, which have been handsome in their time, but have now become dingy from neglect; enough of the gilding on the ornamental part remains to show how rich it had once been, and how tawdry it is now; no performances had taken place in them for a very considerable number of years, and from the present temper of the court, they are not likely

to be soon renewed : there is no great occasion indeed that they should be, since Paris is so close at hand, where theatres of every description abound.

Napoleon very rarely visited Versailles, and when he did, he never took up his residence in the palace ; which, notwithstanding his vast love of dominion, he, *even he*, thought too grand, too magnificent, for his retirement from public business ; he always preferred the more simple abode of Le Petit Trianon, because it had little pomp about it.

You will perceive that I have not attempted to give you any thing like a detailed description of the palace ; it was better to stop where I did, and leave the rest to your own fancy ; in mercy to the architect I have done this, because I know your taste is superior to mine, and on that account the magnificence of the building will not be likely to suffer from my silence, nor your imagination.

After all I have said in the course of my Tour, respecting the imperfect manner in which, from my limited visit to the continent, I am obliged to view the vast public works that are constantly presenting

themselves to my notice, you will not now feel disappointed that I have said so little, but perhaps rather wonder that I have written so much. I have indeed been more prone to obtrude my own remarks, and to wear you out, I fear, with my tiresome conceits on the various objects that have presented themselves, than to give you any thing like a cool and dispassionate description of the actual face of things. I have not been contented merely to sketch the surface of objects as I have seen them, but have ventured (rather rashly perhaps) to plunge a little beyond, and write as I have felt them : I shall offer no apology for this, because you wished my letters to be long, and I had no better way of making them so,—for reason and moral present a wide field to dilate in. I may indeed have made but indifferent work of it, yet it has, nevertheless, enabled me to comply with your wishes ; so that I have kept my promise, whatever I may have done with my judgment. We are now about to visit the vale of Montmorency, and I shall commence my next letter with an account of that excursion ; but before I begin it, this scene of constant gaiety in which we have performed our part with unceasing activity, will have given place to the more silent, but not less alluring,

charms of the arcadia of the once happy Swiss.— Yes, once happy! for ye were the last of Europe who preserved the innocence of rustic life. Secure in your own humility, your condition could neither provoke envy, nor inspire fear; like the children of one family, you lived in concord together, and ranged your native mountains, without wishing to pass a single foot beyond them: free from ambition, and with few desires, you were not merely resigned to your poverty, but were happiest in it. The times, however, are now changed; your society has been broken in upon by your less peaceful neighbours, and the intrusion has poisoned, for ever, the pure sources of your native simplicity.

I suppose you will think, on reading this apostrophe, that I might as well have deferred it till my next letter, as it would come more in character from the bosom of their own mountains, than breathed, as it now is, through the medium of a Parisian atmosphere; but no matter, I happen to be in the humour for it now, and perhaps it is better to take my fancies at their own time than to put them off till mine, lest they should not be ready when I want them; and I know you will be better

pleased to have it as it is, at the time it will reach you, than wait till I could adjust my letter to the rigid rules and forms of criticism. You must not expect to hear from me for some time, as I shall not write till my arrival at Lausanne, and I mean to loiter a little of my time away in my progress thither.

I spend a great portion of my nights in writing to you, because I find ample employment in the day to fill up my time from breakfast till supper; but I am happy to do this, as it is a pleasure I would have indulged myself in, even if I had not promised you the account of my Tour: but whatever delight I enjoy in the execution of it, I never leave it off to repair to rest, but a gloom and melancholy succeed to the pleasure of the task. The dead of night is not a season, under any circumstances, for the happy association of ideas; it is indeed the hour to renovate exhausted nature, and bring man back to all his wonted vigour; but sleep is not only a medicine for our weariness,—it is a memento also of the inevitable lot of man: and if under any circumstances, at such a time, a train of

gloomy thoughts obtrude themselves upon us, how must it be with him, whose wayward fortune has blighted every hope? who has seen so fair a portion of life pass from him, without smile or sunshine, to cheer it as it went,—and who is journeying on in the bleak chilly path of what remains, in all the weary sameness of the past.

LETTER VI.

Lausanne.

I HAD not finished my last letter to you from Paris till three in the morning, and got so beset with the blue devils from a bad headach, and the melancholy beating of torrents of rain against my window, together with the lateness of the night, and my consciousness that I ought to have been fast asleep long before that time, that when I got to bed I could do nothing with it.

I am persuaded, more than ever, that there is something in the nature of night which acts like poison on the mind awake, and that man in a state of sleep during that season, is not only benefited by the renovating power of rest, but shielded by his slumber from the baneful influence which a sunless atmosphere would otherwise have upon his animal spirits. The breath of Hygeia fans off the noxious vapours which night breathes around the *sleep*-pressed couch, till the sun's rising beam relieves the watchful sentry from her guard. I had been too thought-

ful all night to benefit much from this guardian of health, for she deserts us if we wake, whether the sun be up or not; and as my restless night had left my head in a worse plight than it found it, we deferred our visit to Montmorency till the following day, and spent this in lounging about Paris, and making purchases. Indeed, I should have told you before this, that I have not forgotten to provide something for the decoration of your person, as it would be too bad to consider your mind alone, and treat you with nothing but descriptions, while there are novelties of silk, as well as of scenery. I shall not tell you now what I have done in this way, so that your curiosity will thus be on the alert, and it will be more welcome when you receive it through the medium of my hand, if I avoid presenting it to you now through that of my pen.

Having made our purchases for our own use, and for presents to our friends, we took a drive about the Boulevards, and then went to see the new church called the Pantheon. It is not yet finished, though nearly so, and when completed will be a grand additional ornament to a city, already abounding in the most magnificent public buildings. In the vaults

below, we saw the tombs of Rousseau, Voltaire, and the Duke de Montebello; their marble monuments were not finished, so that we saw little else than the depository of their ashes. In passing from this cold abode of death and twilight, in order to ascend the church, a violent storm of thunder and rain burst suddenly over us; it was preceded by a whirlwind, which rushed in through the two open doors at the extremities of the building, and which seemed as if disposed to carry us up the shortest way into the doom; it was with difficulty we kept our legs, the gust was so sudden and violent. The thunder which instantly followed, sounded as if the holy edifice were split asunder, and peal succeeding peal, and flash succeeding flash, in torrents of rain, all re-echoing through the vaults below us, and accompanied with the darkness of a dismal night, had altogether so powerful an effect, that I never remember one so awful;—it seemed like the prelude to the last trumpet;—like the call for silence, before the final blast which is to summon all to judgment.

We dined on this day at the greatest Restaurateur in Paris—Beauvilliers. I have already given you an

account of the manner of going on at these places, when I spoke of the Café des Milles Colonnes; so that it would be superfluous to say any thing further on this subject; let it suffice, that the female presidency in splendid array, is kept up here as at the other great places, before a marble slab, with bronze supporters.

On the following morning we visited the cemetery of Père Le Chase, which stands on a high hill overlooking the entire city of Paris. This place was once the demesne of the Confessor of Louis the Fourteenth, whose name it still bears; the chateau in which he resided is still standing, but it is little else now than a ruin. A great part of the deceased Parisians are buried in this ground, so that their persons have found in death a more elevated residence than their living abodes;—may their spirits have found it so too! Having entertained ourselves with viewing the city from this eminence, together with the strong fortress of Vincennes which is right in view, we took a ramble amongst the tombs: here we saw on many a monument a solitary bunch of flowers, which love or duty had bestowed upon it as a tribute to the remembrance of what its silent

tenant once had been ; but, like the mortals underneath, their bloom was faded too, and all their sweetness fled, like incense that just breathes upon the altar and expires. It is a custom here to visit the tombs of deceased relatives or friends at stated periods, and offer up prayers for their eternal rest ; the motive is pious and charitable, and whatever may be the religion of the spectator of such a ceremony, he cannot but wish they may be granted. At a distance from us, we observed a group busily at work in preparing a grave, and conceiving from their number that they were about something more important than the common order of interment, we advanced towards them, and found they were depositing in a stone vault, which had been prepared for the purpose, the remains of Abelard and Eloisa, for ever lost “ to Paraclete’s white walls and silver springs.” Their monument, which we had seen at Les Petits Augustins, was now at this cemetery, that it might be erected over their new dug grave, to commemorate their third funeral.

We now passed through the Barrière de St. Denis on our way to Montmorency ; the storm of the preceding day had laid the dust, and cooled the

air, so that our excursion was exceedingly pleasant; the same gentleman who had accompanied us when we visited l'Hôtel des Invalides, was our companion on this occasion, and from his acquaintance with the country, and his affability of manners, we found him a valuable acquisition to our party. After passing the little town of St. Denis, the country became delightful, and as we approached the vale of Montmorency, the scenery continued to improve upon us, from its romantic beauties; we passed through roads like walks of gardens, bordered with fruit trees, and from the open carriage we plucked abundance of cherries of the most delicious flavour. A couple of peasant boys kept trotting on foot by the side of us, tendering their services to guide us through the lovely vale before us, and presenting us with wood strawberries which they had just gathered; they entertained us with a duet in half-breathed notes, which the steep ascent of the hill we had just passed, had set to music for them, and they were as perfect in it, as short breath, at least, could make them; yet nothing relaxing in their importunity for employment, they increased their clamour as we approached the village, for they knew well enough, that the entire juvenile population of

the place were on the look out for customers of our sort, and that their hopes of success might thus be lessened with every step of their advance, unless they urged their suit stoutly while they had the opportunity; and to this end they exerted every nerve.

On our arrival, we found that the rising generation of Montmorency had no other occupation than the precarious one of conductor to strangers: we were now beset at every point by all who saw us, except our late attendants; and these, (with all the confidence of lovers, who feel that they have made the best use of the time which fortune had enabled them to pass with their mistresses,) kept in the rear of the fresh besieging party with apparent indifference and self-complacency. The rogues knew well enough, (young as they were,) that the impression was made, and they looked over the heads of their rivals merely to catch the assenting nod. It would have been but justice to have punished their confidence with the neglect which it merited; but nature is stronger still than that; we remembered the mile they had run up hill with us, and the industry with which they had courted our favour;—the song

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they sung us at our pleasure, and the fruit which we received at theirs:—we were women every inch of us, even I among the rest, and the assenting nod was given. Oh! had you seen them pass in triumph through the crowd of importuning boys who had beset us, dismissing them from their useless perseverance, and advancing to us with all the confidence of superior claim, you would have smiled at the metamorphose which success can make upon an humble suppliant. Look to this, all-conquering woman! Men are your slaves,—the humblest suitors for a very smile;—they speak upon their knees, if you but bless them with the sunshine of your presence;—you are their oracle, their guiding star, their life, their health, their fortune; what they say is all in deference to your better sense:—break but their chain,—give the assenting nod, and they are all the boys of Montmorency Vale.

With our lively guides we now sallied forth, and proceeded through one of the most enchanting wilds I ever traversed; down slopes bordered with laburnum, and through groves of chesnut full of bloom, intersected with meandering streams, whose shaded banks are crowned with the arbutus; here and

there, among the thickest of the foliage, sat some sweet young girls, employed in knitting lace ; their lovely faces blushing through the verdure which enclosed them, and catching oft and on with their bright eyes the sun's rays as they moved them, looked like wild roses with the dew upon them. Further within the vale, and where the sun could scarcely penetrate, a group of youths had assembled to play at ball ; the space in which they held their exercise was cleared of all the underwood, and formed a spacious square, with no other impediment to their sport, than here and there a beech or lime tree, which remained as supporters to the network of ivy which canopied the place :—the loftier trees, which formed the boundary to the spot, added to the shade, and fanning with the breeze, through the interstices of the verdant roof, increased the coolness of this retired scene. I could have joined in their game with all the relish of my school-boy recollection, for the players here were students of a seminary near at hand, and every way my equal ; but I was not invited to join them, so continued a mere looker on, with just the same sensation that I have often felt as a boy, when, in casting lots for players, I had drawn an unpropitious one, and was

condemned to be a mere cutter of notches for the game which I had been burning to play.

Having witnessed their sport for a while, we proceeded further into the vale through many a winding course of woodbine and wild jasmine, till we reached the hermitage of Jean Jacques Rousseau. It is as romantic and retired as the sombre taste of that extraordinary genius could desire. It is a neat small building in the bosom of the vale, like a monument dedicated to solitude. Here we were informed that he wrote several of his works ; and, indeed, the silence of the place must have greatly favoured that uninterrupted train of thinking so necessary to the composition of works of philosophy. He was not happy here, as his abrupt departure from the place has proved ; the lines written underneath his bust in the garden by the lady to whom the hermitage belonged, (for it was not Rousseau's property though called by his name,) are expressive of her sorrow at his leaving the place. To say merely that he was not happy here, would be giving but a very imperfect picture of his mind, for he was happy nowhere : the melancholic was his temperament, and though philosophy was his fort, it was not strong

enough to protect him against the shafts of discontent, nor persuasive enough to teach him to despise the frowns of fortune. He looked at human life in all its darkest shades, and looked so keenly too, that many a cheering incident passed by him unenjoyed, even unnoticed; he dreaded so much the thorns that might tease him in his progress, that nothing of the fruit, which hung in clusters by them, was seen or tasted: his very joys created melancholy, for as their duration was uncertain, he mistrusted them,—as they were transient, he looked only towards the hour when they should cease. In the latter period of his life he was in England, and for some time enjoyed a pension, which was privately conferred upon him through respect for his talents, and a generous feeling for his dependent condition: for a while he was contented with this improvement in his circumstances, because he considered the grant as a mere liquidation of a debt due to his abilities; and under this impression his independent spirit had suffered nothing in the receipt of it. He was constantly invited to the tables of the great, who admired his genius, and courted his conversation; but he had got the notion at last into his head, that he was invited merely to satisfy curiosity, and that he was

thus to be shown about, as any other extraordinary creature, till the rage for seeing him should have subsided : he saw himself in chains, like a wild beast, led about from place to place, and became disgusted at the ridiculous pictures which his own feverish imagination was continually painting ; he was too quick,—too susceptible, in all that related to himself, ever to be tranquil : so tenacious was he of independence, that poverty, with all its bitter privations, could not make it so unpalatable to him as the world's wealth without it ; the first moment he had a doubt whether it had not suffered by his acceptance of fortune, he renounced all title to her smiles, and abandoning his pension left England in disgust, and was at length reduced to seek a precarious subsistence, by copying music in a garret near Paris, where he died in great distress.

“ Wise Fool ! with pleasures too refined to please,
With too much spirit to be e'er at ease,
With too much quickness ever to be taught,
With too much thinking, to have common thought ;
Who purchase pain, with all that joy can give,
And die of nothing but a rage to live.”

We now returned to our hotel, and having satis-

fied our young guides with money and provisions, we sat down to our dinner, which the long ramble in the vale had prepared us to enjoy ; we continued chatting over some excellent Burgundy and delicious fruit, till it was high time to think of our journey back to Paris, where we arrived about eleven o'clock, and found the city illuminated. The king had reviewed the Garde Nationale in the morning, and in consequence there was this manifestation of rejoicing at night. As you have seen a review, and an illumination also, it might appear superfluous to give you any description of them here ; but as there was much novelty in the arrangement of the one, (the account of which I had from a spectator of it,) and very little light in the composition of the other, (which I saw myself,) it may not be quite so uninteresting as it would at first appear.

It was understood that twenty thousand men were to have been reviewed at eleven o'clock ; but no more than six thousand made their appearance. They were all under arms at ten, waiting the arrival of the king, and at two in the afternoon the cannon gave notice of his approach ; it was somewhat tiresome to Parisian nerves to be kept so long on the

tiptoe of expectation ; but what of that you'll say,—the delay, no doubt, was occasioned by the splendid preparations necessary to usher in so vast a personage. He comes at last ;—of course the air resounds with acclamations, and in an instant, in the centre of his Marshals, borne on a fiery charger, sparkling in rich caparison, bends to the greetings of enraptured thousands. 'Tis all illusion ! Silence for once had possessed the city of Paris, at least the Boulevards, and the review proceeds with all the solemnity of funereal ceremony. In a carriage of state drawn by eight horses, with the windows close up—to keep out, no doubt, the chilly winds of August,—sits the king ; who having thus passed in slow time, between the lines which are drawn up on each side, completes the labours of the martial day :—the troops are dismissed, and the yawning population return to their homes in silent admiration of the grand spectacle.

The brilliancy of such a day could not be suddenly extinguished, and at night we find its departing rays still gilding the city with a glimmering light. To speak less figuratively, a few candles scattered here and there, at respectful distances from

each other,—one or two in the attic of this house, and two or three in the parlour of that,—lighted up the town with just that sort of beauty, which a few straggling hairs display on a bald head; the one served to show the paucity of interest which the Parisians felt, and the other the quality of the ornament of which it was so deficient. It would have been better for the city had its darkness been less visible, and for the head had it been hid under a wig.

With this last sentence I bid adieu to Paris. I have no more to say in praise or censure, and quit the subject, as I have done hundreds of others that have furnished pleasure for a while, by tickling the fancy without touching the heart: my sojournment there has been rather frivolous than profitable, yet not altogether useless, since it has served to show me something more of mankind than I could have learnt without it; yet I have left it without a sigh. This, I confess, is treating a great city with but little respect, particularly when I add, that even a clump of trees, or little brook, has received from me a kinder farewell. The separation of companions in cities does not impress like the adieu which is bid

in solitude and retirement;—the first deprives us of little but local pleasure and dissipation, and the sadness which follows it finds relief in every fresh scene of amusement; but retirement is the climate in which love and friendship grow wild, as it were, or rather, where every thing contributes to their growth. The branches of the plants which flourish in its soil, unite by uninterrupted intercourse, and blend together in one congenial vegetation; they cannot be divided without violence,—they must be torn asunder to be separated. In large and populous cities there is no time for imperceptible union; a first impression is forced to yield to the persevering pressure of novelty; nothing is allowed to take root or become engrafted; we just find time, perhaps, to form an attachment, and the object of it is hurried away in the crowd that surrounds us; a fresh acquaintance, or more fashionable lover, next attracts her,—holds for a little time his fleeting influence, and then, in turn, makes room for some more welcome successor; thus we brush against each other in a continual round, but seldom unite;—when we quit society like this we do not separate,—we only depart; we have laughed with the gay, and joked with the witty; we have played our part on

the stage of pleasure, and retire, unnoticed, from a scene where there are too many together for us to be missed. Under these impressions I quitted Paris, and scarcely felt it necessary to seek fresh amusements to soften the anguish of our farewell.

I cannot conclude this letter without observing that it closes every thing connected with *la gaieté*; no further description of plays, of operas, of great public buildings, paintings, or statues, must be expected henceforth in my Narrative. I am about to begin an account (if such I may call it) of my progress through woods and vineyards, to a country abounding in the wonders of nature, not of art.

LETTER VII.

Lausanne.

ON the morning following the splendid illumination, having furnished ourselves with some excellent wine and dried provisions, as a precaution against the unpalatable fare of some poor villages, at which we might be obliged to put up on our journey to Switzerland, we set forward on our route by the way of Melun; here we arrived in the cool of the evening, and took a walk about the town and its vicinity.

It was at this spot, you may remember, that the great stand was to have been made by the Bourbon army against the further advance of Napoleon, when he was taking his pleasant walk from Frejus towards the capital, after his quitting Elba. But that I may not be tempted, by the historical importance of the place, into any political detail for which this subject furnishes abundant matter, and which at some future day will fill one of History's most

conspicuous pages, I shall say no more of Melun, than that we remained there for the night.

On the following morning we proceeded on our way to Sens, about fifteen French leagues from Melun. I shall not halt here to give you any description of the churches, as I used to do on the journey prior to our reaching Paris. I am not aware, indeed, of any thing worth communicating ; but independently of this, I fear I am getting rather careless on the point, and I know not what cause to attribute it to, unless the example which has been set me in the indifference of the Parisians to every thing connected with the subject, may have tainted me with their distaste ; or, perhaps, the sameness of the descriptions may at length have tired even the author of them. When I began my Tour, every thing was new to me, and the most trifling object or incident was received as welcome food into the hungry sheets of my first epistles ; but my pages have since been crammed to satiety with the homely fare, and must now be humoured into appetite, by the allurements of some savory sauce, before they can be coaxed to the meal ; for, after all, there is a tincture of self-interestedness, even in the *best* of

mankind, that prompts him to please himself a little in whatever he may do for the entertainment or benefit of others ;—I need not, therefore, offer apology for feeling the necessity of such an impetus to my epistolary pastime ; and although the pleasure of writing to you, would give a piquancy to an otherwise even insipid subject, yet I must find novelty now and then to communicate, or ennui would inevitably put a stop to my exertions. Having thus prefaced my further proceedings, I shall advance without the fear, which I should otherwise have, of falling short of your expectations.

Having enjoyed a charming drive in a rich and arable country, through which the high road runs from Sens to Auxerre, we alighted about midway between those towns, and took a walk towards the banks of the river Yonne, which meanders about the enchanting scenery of that fertile spot ; there, in a most delightful dale, that slopes to the very edge of the river, we were induced to loiter away an hour or two, and so desired our cocher to bring our basket of cold provision and wine, that we might regale ourselves in all the romantic luxury of the place. Our carriage was drawn up as near as cir-

cumstances would permit, to our delightful retreat ; and thus removed from the notice of the public road, we were as secure from interruption as if the enchanting spot had been our own ; and so it was indeed, while in possession, for what use could we have made of it, had even the title-deeds been ours, but to enjoy it. As we made a dinner of our repast, we had no particular object to hurry us on to Auxerre, so we continued our ramble about the place beyond the time we had at first intended ;—but what of that ? To pass away an hour or two of life in such calm pleasure, may not square, indeed, with the dry calculations of the mercenary speculator, who knows no value in time but the pecuniary profit to which it may be applied, and who admits no wealth but what he can negotiate on the Exchange ; to such an one, I should plead in vain, that my time had not been unprofitably spent, when I had gained instruction and pleasure from nature, at no greater cost than the time required to receive and to enjoy it ; but you, whose reasoning is not confined to the narrow limits of counting-house philosophy, need not be told by me, that it is in such an hour or two as I have mentioned, we are let into the important secret, that happiness is not

so difficult of access as the world in general imagine; that rational pleasure is within the reach of most of us; and that content depends, not upon the vast possession of wealth, but upon the moderation of desire.

We now bade adieu to our shady retreat, but not till we had carved our names in full, on a young beech, whose thick foliage had sheltered us from the overpowering heat of a cloudless sun: there, in love of the place, we have recorded ourselves, and there, in all probability, we shall continue to flourish, long after we shall have been forgotten by all, but the angry Dryads who saw the wounds inflicted: the beauty of the place will preserve it from the rude hand of the woodman, and our names will be protected by the influence of its charms, till time, which changes the face of all things, shall wither the characters with the bark, and wipe us off the sylvan register, where we now live so green and flourishing.

On our arrival at Auxerre, we desired to be driven to the best inn of course; but as *best* depends always on the taste or interest of him who recom-

mends, we can form no idea of what is meant by it, till we are permitted to judge for ourselves in the experiment. I remember once hearing a gentleman, who was passionately fond of music, observe, that he always made a point of being early at a concert, in order to get the best seat, which, in his opinion, was that nearest the orchestra. I could not make out how it was so, since I had always myself preferred a more distant situation, till I found that he was hard of hearing, and the riddle was explained. Now the best inn, if you happen to enquire of a gourmand in the street, is, where the eating is richest and most plentiful ; and if of a disciple of Bacchus, where the wine is most inspiring : perhaps it was of one of these that our cocher enquired, when he was directed to the Hôtel de — : but as a good night's rest was our chief consideration, we made a point, on alighting, to see about the chambers ; and all the choice afforded was three wretched beds in one worse room, which was no very inviting prospect where a single lady is concerned. We did not wait to find out in what our guide's notion of *best* consisted ; nor did we ever discover, or indeed care about it, since we found at

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the Leopard every thing we desired, and set off the following morning for Rouvray.

As there was a good deal of hill-work for the horses in this day's journey, we were not able to reach that town, and were obliged to put up at a lone house, at ten o'clock at night, about a mile out of the public road. The appearance of the place was rather against it, to those whose taste the use of comforts had spoiled for flock beds, jack-towel sheets, and sanded tile floors; but where there is no choice, the proudest must yield :—we had walked up several of the hills, to save our horses, in the course of the day; and fatigue is not much disposed to quarrel with any place of rest.

A large kitchen divided my room from that of my companions; and in a recess, at one extremity of it, was a bed, screened by a dirty old red-and-white chequered curtain, full of large holes; through one of which, at each extremity, we were greeted, on entrance, by a grim face, surmounted with a red cap, which once, no doubt, in its earlier servitude, had been able to confine the stubble which it en-

compassed ; but, alas ! subdued by its hard duty, it could no longer keep under the refractory bristles, which now stood on end through the breaches of their prison. Conceive to yourself a welcome of this sort, in a lone house, at the entrance of a wood nine miles through ; and when you feel the alarm getting master of you, imagine a whispering from various quarters, without being able to see the mouths from whence it issued ; then, when you have worked up your fears to an almost overwhelming pitch, just fancy to yourself, on suddenly looking up, an arm extended from a hole in the ceiling, beckoning a tall figure, with a belt and hatchet, who had just come in at a back door ; and when you have got the picture to this height of colouring, keep looking at it with all the chilly sensations which it inspires, till the recollection comes upon you, that, whatever the prospect, there is no eluding it ; and I think you will have done enough for yourself in the way of terrors. There was no getting out of this business ; so I judged it better to put a good face upon it, and, calling for a bottle of such wine as they had, and an omelet, we refreshed ourselves and retired to rest ; but not before we had examined our separate cells, (without indeed appear-

ing to do so,) to see that there was no way of entrance or exit, but by the door at which we were introduced: having settled matters on this point to our satisfaction, we separated.

I must confess I did not like the appearance of things, but could hardly bring myself to believe in the residence of banditti so near the public road, except in the pages of romance. Caution, however, is always the right side of doubt; so, without taking off more than my coat and boots, I threw myself into bed, and lay divided between sleep and the adventure; but just as the former was getting a-head, and I had nearly forgotten where I was, I heard a strange breathing noise, close to the head of my bed, and began to fear I had not been sufficiently particular in examining my room; for no one could enter by the door, as I had taken care to double-lock and bolt it. I listened again, and heard the breathing distinctly; my heart began now to quicken its pace a little, and had got from the quiet gentle walk into a trot: I thought that before it got into a gallop, it would be better to be on my legs, and prepared for the worst; so jumping out of bed, (as much as to say, who's afraid?) I rushed to the door, and unbolt-

ing it, disturbed one of the many occupants of the kitchen, which was by this time converted into a general chamber:—"Est-ce que Monsieur manque le?" was the first exclamation which greeted my ear, in a female voice, since our arrival. "Non," replied I, "je manque seulement la lumière"—With the greatest good-nature she brought me one, and showed her civility in so doing, at the expense of her modesty, for she had nothing on but her chemise; I wished her good night, and, having again secured my door, renewed my examination of the room.

Darkness is a powerful ally to terrors; and it not unfrequently happens, that without its assistance, they are scarcely formidable enough to produce more than a start on the nerves which they assail. The breathing which I had heard, I now began to think could have been nothing but the wind, and the rustling of the leaves in the great wood beside us,—so valiant does a lighted candle make us. I was almost resolute enough by this time to be ashamed of myself; and out of bravado, was actually going to extinguish the light, when my hand was arrested by the dreaded sound. I listened attentively,

and traced it to the place I at first imagined it issued from. There was now no longer a doubt upon the point; so, pulling my bed away from the wall behind it, I discovered the real, the genuine nightmare; no sickly offspring of the fancy, mounted by a sleep-oppressing dæmon, but a good substantial horse, who, with a kindly snort, dismissed all my fears and anxiety: not even a window glass separated me from my welcome companion, and I was glad of it;—for there was more to allay my doubts in his physiognomy, than in that of any of his masters,—and, patting his neck through the hole in the wall, I wished him good night, and slept till six the next morning, without further fear or trembling.

Had we given ourselves time to think, we should not have found it so difficult to account for the strange appearance of things, on our arrival at this place. The proximity of the wood might have accounted for the hatchet and belt, and the novelty of visitors in a carriage, for the silent reception and the respectful whispers, as well as for the arm that beckoned, in order, no doubt, to make silent enquiry about the unlooked-for guests. The fact is,

the inhabitants of this lone residence were hewers of wood, and in all probability, (whatever their appearance,) full as honest as ourselves.

We proceeded to Rouvray to breakfast, and endeavoured to arrange so as to avoid, as much as possible, the necessity of passing any more nights in such inconvenient abodes. The town of Pont Pagni is but a moderate day's journey as to distance, and we decided on making that our next resting place, and promised ourselves to make up for the interrupted sleep of the night before ; but distance is not the only difficulty that should present itself to a traveller's mind, when he is arranging each day's journey : on our arrival at Vitteaux, where we dined, we found it indispensably necessary to procure the aid of two additional horses, to draw us up the extensive mountain which commences the road out of that town ; and so much time was employed in this up-hill work, for the rest of the day, that with all our cocher's efforts we could not get beyond the little miserable hamlet of Somberton, and were here reduced to put up with our former night's fare, in every thing but the terrors of it ; and, to add to our mortification, the following morning opened in tor-

rents of rain, which continued throughout the entire day, and drenched our poor cocher to the skin, who, while he was wringing the wet from his clothes, and lifting up his legs to pour it out of his boots, persisted in exclaiming, in answer to my pity—"Toujours sec, toujours sec,"—and was perfectly contented with the state of things.

On our arrival at a village within three leagues of the town, where we intended to pass the night, we were informed that it would be dangerous to proceed any further, as a lion was in the great wood through which we must pass to Auxonne, and that the military had gone in pursuit. I conceived it a trick to keep us at the wretched inn which our informant occupied ; and proceeded, in spite of his intreaties. I must confess that while in the wood, I began to conceive the possibility of wolves, or even more formidable wild beasts being in it, though a lion, except by the merest chance, was totally out of the question ; however this might be, we passed the wood without a visit from any of its grim tenants, and arrived in good time for dinner at Auxonne : here we learned, that there was something in the story of the village innkeeper, though no lion had

been discovered, but a hyena, as was said, or more likely a wolf, had been killed by some soldiers; who, in consequence of two children having been destroyed close to that very wood, by some savage animals, had been sent in search of them.

The rain, which had been pouring incessantly during this day's journey, continued after our arrival at Auxonne, and consequently prevented our making any observations on the town. We were pent up at our hotel from the same cause, till twelve the following day, when, notwithstanding its threatening appearance, we proceeded on our way to Salins.

The day, however, soon afterwards cleared up, and the weather resumed its wonted heat and beauty. About half way between Auxonne and Salins we got into a grand and mountainous country, filled with woods and glens, very much resembling the scenery of the Dargle, and Poule a Phouka, in Ireland, except that the variety is greater here, and the whole on a hundredfold larger scale. The brows of the mountains whose summits are so grand, are covered with most extensive vineyards, where they face the south, and on their northern sides with immense

woods of fir. This sublime scenery continued before us during the remainder of the day, increasing in grandeur with every turn of the road, till we passed the strong fortress of St. André, and descended into the town of Salins. The fortress is situated on the summit of the highest mountain but one in that chain ; it stood a siege of three months prior to Napoleon's first abdication, with a garrison of fifty-six men against twenty thousand Austrians, till, being exhausted of provisions, they capitulated with honors of war.

Having ordered dinner at our hotel, we proceeded to visit the great salt-works from which the town takes its name. We descended a considerable depth by a corkscrew staircase, till we came to the two springs of salt water. They issue from small cavities in the solid rock, at a very short distance from each other, although of immense difference in their saline strength, the one being of twenty degrees and the other of three only ; and these are mixed in certain proportions prior to their being conveyed into the boilers where the process is carried on. Without the aid of machinery the salt springs would not be accessible, in consequence of the river

Furieuse taking its rise in this chain of mountains, and one of its sources rushing out of the very rock in question. The fresh water is pumped up by the operation of works, as at London bridge, and by that means conveyed into the Furieuse without touching the saline fluid. These works are a source of great profit to the revenue of France, and the salt is exceedingly white and of excellent flavour. It does not appear that it is used in Paris, nor in any of the towns in that part, though so much superior to what is consumed there. Switzerland is supplied from it; but that country is close at hand, and consequently requires but little land carriage, for that is the sole conveyance: perhaps, indeed, the expense of this may account for its absence from the capital, at least for general consumption.

Having satisfied our curiosity at this place, we returned to our hotel, and set about gratifying our appetites too. For the sake of variety, and by the way of a treat after so many dinners of fricassee, fricandeau, &c. &c., we had ordered a small leg of mutton, which we found in the larder on our arrival, to be roasted in the plain English fashion, which the cook told me he perfectly understood;

but a French cuisinier will never be brought so entirely to ruin a joint, (as he calls it,) as to let it be served up à l'Anglaise, though it may be roasted as such ; and in spite of all my clear injunctions, up it came, drenched in piquant sauce ; and all the flavour of the only leg of mutton I could ever get hold of, was sacrificed in a moment to the tyranny of inexorable French taste. It was very good, however, though not the thing we wanted.

Our hostess was very communicative, and employed herself during our dinner in giving us a concise history of the war in that part of France, during the campaign which immediately preceded Napoleon's first abdication. Her husband and brother had both been killed during that contest, she told us, and whose fate she considered more fortunate than that of those who had survived his overthrow. I was astonished to find, throughout all that part of France which we visited, the open manner in which the natives in general regretted the changed state of things : the poor, they said, were always employed during the empire, and, in consequence, want prevailed only in the habitations of the idle ; but now, they told us, every Commune was groaning under

its ravages, and that it was no unfrequent circumstance to see hundreds of young men reduced to skeletons, for want of sufficient food, traversing in a body, barefooted, through the country, soliciting employment or charity. Perhaps a great portion of this distress may be attributable to the unfavourable harvest of the preceding year, and if so, that part of the mischief will be removed by a more productive season. But I have my fears, that although there may be something in this, the greatest evil to be dreaded is in the political feelings of the people, who are by no means thankful (whatever the opinion of the English may be of their ingratitude on that account,)—they are by no means thankful for the trouble we took to emancipate them from the tyranny of their late master, whose name they never hear mentioned without a sigh. Of course, I am now speaking of the middle and humbler classes of the people; those in higher life are more circumspect, and without delivering an opinion on the state of things, unless on terms of intimacy with you, never hear the present condition of France mentioned without a shrug, and the expressive, though but half-muttered exclamation, of—*La pauvre France!* Whether things will in time tranquillize themselves,

or not, to existing circumstances, I leave to the calculations of more political heads than mine ; and carry you on, with me, from Salins, which we quitted the next morning, in order to proceed to Pontarlier.

We had une fameuse montagne (as our cocher called it) to ascend on quitting the town, of more than six English miles in length, and so very steep, that we sent our horses forward, to walk at leisure up it ; and putting four fresh ones to our carriage, we sallied forth in slow time, and enjoyed, at leisure, the extensive prospect which was continually improving with our increasing elevation. We were more than two hours before we reached the level at the top, when, resuming our own horses, we continued our route through a truly romantic and wild country, somewhat resembling, but not so beautiful and diversified, the scenery of the preceding day.

My pen begins to falter here, for want of incident to interest you in the reading : but as the mind should not always be on the stretch, neither with entertainment nor business, I consider the absence of interest now and then as a welcome vacuity, or

sort of resting place, where you may throw your mind back, as you sometimes do your person on a chair, when you become tired of sitting in an erect posture. In one of these moods I fancy I see you now, contemplating in your mind's eye the wild scenery which I would fain paint for you, but want the genius to describe. I cannot give novelty to my picture, though I see and enjoy it in this delightful country, with every turn of the eye. You must be contented, therefore, with what the enthusiasm of my feelings prompts me now and then to attempt—not from any vanity that I have in my own powers, but from a desire that you should partake, as much as I am able to let you, of the pleasure which I enjoy myself.

We arrived at Pontarlier at five o'clock, and took a walk about the town. There are no public buildings or curiosities here worth the description, so that our ramble served merely to stretch our legs, and fill up the hour in which our dinner was preparing. Having enjoyed ourselves till late in talking over our adventures, and indulging myself in an additional pint of Burgundy, we retired to rest; and found the accommodation here make up for a good

deal of the inconvenience we had experienced on the road, which, though it vexed at the time, furnished us now with subject for laughter.

We started the next morning with minds alive to the anticipated beauties of Switzerland. There was now but the little town of Joigny which divided us from that enchanting country ; and away we drove in the height of health and spirits. We soon passed this frontier, which is situated on the summit of a mountain, where we alighted, and proceeded on foot into one of the beautiful valleys of the Jura, and rambled at leisure up the gradual ascents on the opposite side ; while our carriage had to traverse the advancing and retiring road of the mountain, and which appeared to us, from the elevation we had gained, as if involved in the intricacies of a maze.

From the delay which this difficult and winding course necessarily occasioned, we were tempted to make the best use of our time, and I descended once more into the valley, in order to rid the carriage of some of its burthen, and returned to my hungry companions with some bread and dried tongue, and a bottle of champaign, on which we

found ample time to regale ourselves before the arrival of our cocher. You remember the enchanting glen of the Downs on La Touche's estate at Delgany:—such is the beautiful scenery in the midst of which we had enjoyed our repast. The weather was inspiring, and the rain, which had fallen but a day or two before, had cooled the air, and given a delicious fragrance to the wild herbs which covered the uncultivated parts of the mountain; and from the same cause the waterfalls, with which the place abounds, were in full play, and heightened the charms of the landscape.

From the top of this eminence we advanced along a level road till we arrived at the station of la Gendarmerie de Ballaigues, a frontier of Switzerland. Having refreshed our horses here, we proceeded through the place, which is so situated as to obstruct the prospect of the country beyond it; but as soon as the projecting part of the mountain which intercepts the view was passed, the grandest sight I ever beheld, burst suddenly upon us;—the chain of the Upper Alps, with not a cloud to obstruct the summits, towered like the majesty of earth before us, covering a nation with their base, and bearing the

Tour.

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heavens, as it were, upon their pinnacles ; inanimate nature sloping towards their feet, seemed prostrate before their awful dignity : the winds are their breathings, and thunder is their voice. As far as the eye can carry, runs the uninterrupted elysium of the valleys which encompass them, studded with wood, and covered with corn and pasture, which industry has taught to climb, even to the summits of the opposing mountains. I was particularly struck with the grandeur and vastness of the Great Saint Bernard, rendered so memorable by Napoleon's passage over it with the Republican army, preparatory to the great battle of Marengo. As there were no clouds hovering about it, we could distinctly see the snow through a hundred different openings near its summit.

We contemplated this sublime prospect till our cocher, (who happened to have more taste for his dinner than for sublimity,) very prudently hinted, that unless we made a little more progress in our journey, we might be under the necessity of passing the night in the midst of this captivating scenery ; so down into the valley we drove, and found another mountain staring us full in the face : two

fresh horses were added to our own to draw us up it, and when after much whipping we reached the top, our splendid view returned upon us, and accompanied us to the town of Lasarez : we arrived in good time, and were so pleased with the inn and prospect from it, that we determined, to the delight of our cocher, to remain there for the night.

I could not help thinking, during my stay in this retired place, how much of the care and anxiety of the world might be avoided, could we bring ourselves to live without the vanities of it. There is no competition here for splendor,—no vying with each other for an empty superiority. The humble participation of the common benefits of nature is all the rustic ambition of the industrious Swiss ; envy appears to be unknown amongst them, and national taste has bounded their hopes by the mountains which surround them. When we consider life in its application to the bulk of human society, this perhaps is the condition in which it best becomes us ; for the folly of splendid equipage, where there is nothing but its tinsel to distinguish us from the crowd, is as glaring as the gilded bauble which

it displays ; and it is as disgusting as it is absurd, when we reflect that the being who drives such equipage, has, not unfrequently, (if superiority of mind be anything,) a better title to command it. In commercial and speculating countries this must ever be the case, where fortune and distinction depend less on merit than on chance. I know a man who made a fortune on the Stock Exchange in a month : he did this just before I set off on my Tour ; he had hardly talents to support himself by useful employment, yet he now commands an equipage, which it had better become him to have driven. It is by sudden elevations like this, that the higher walks of life are disgraced, and the middle perhaps purified.

Our hostess here was as communicative as that at Salins, and boasted of the campaigns in which her husband had served under Napoleon ; she, too, was tainted with the general enthusiasm, and could hardly be brought to believe that he was at St. Helena ;—but when I told her that he was not only there, but that the English were determined on detaining him a prisoner for life, she actually laughed in my face. These people have a strange notion of

things:—do you know they really believe that something or other will happen, to get him away at last? for they conceive that a fatality directs all his operations:—one thing is certain, however doubtful this may be, that at least they wish it.

When I am cheerful, I am so pleased with the sensation, that it is with difficulty I can prevail upon myself to go to bed, however late the hour. I am always making the calculation of probabilities, and am so disposed to doubt whether sleep will continue my agreeable feelings, that on such occasions, when I do retire, it is always with the greatest reluctance. Now it so happened at Lasarez, that the delight of the day's journey, and the anticipation of increasing pleasure with every advancing step, made me so agreeable to myself, that what with this and the excellent wine, I would not stir an inch from table, (though eleven o'clock at night,) without another pint of Burgundy. And I am sure there is no harm in this, for I never feel so little disposed to mischief as when I am in good humour:—the line, however, must be drawn, or like Burns the Poet, I might drink to the end of the chapter;* for if the

* Burns, the Scotch Bard, having injured his health by a

goodness of wine were to be an excuse, I should never be without it in this country: but as the peace of to-morrow must depend on the prudence of to-day, I drew the line in question at the bottom of this pint, and retired to a refreshing chamber, which had all the sweet breathings from the Alps over their fragrant valleys, to render it inviting.

On the following morning we pursued our course, and entered Lausanne about noon. This town, which is situated on the summit of a hill, commands, from certain parts of it, a most extensive view along Lake Lemman;—the beautiful, the enchanting Lake of Lausanne, as it is called in this part of the country. No longer satisfied with the prospect of it at this respectful distance, I accompanied my companions in a walk to the spot itself, where having traversed the shores till our legs, not our minds, were weary, we entered for rest and pastime into a sailing boat,

too free use of the bottle, was told by his physician, that he could give him no hopes unless he adopted a more temperate course of life, for that the coat of his stomach was totally destroyed; then, replied he, I'll e'en drink to the end of the chapter, for it's not worth while going about with the waist-coat only.

and the wind being favorable both for going out and coming in, we made a pleasant water party for nearly three hours, and returned to Le Lion d'Or to dinner, which we had not forgotten to order on our arrival.

As I have already given you some idea of the scenery of this part of the country, I will not tire you with a repetition of it here, nor shall I have much to entertain you with in any other way. The incidents of retirement, (for such only can I call this place,) are rare indeed when compared with those which the bustle of such a city as Paris, is continually presenting. The retreats, however, of this romantic country could furnish many, I have no doubt, and interesting too; but more time is required to become acquainted with them, than what can be spared out of my limited vacation. In Paris, they are waiting, as it were, to burst upon you the instant you appear, and arrest your progress at the corner of every street and avenue: here it is quite otherwise; you must dig the mine for its treasures,—there is nothing scattered upon the surface. The Swiss are not communicative; you must live amongst them, or you will come away ignorant of all but their simplicity:—they are silent among strangers, not in-

deed from an over-caution like the Scotch, nor from a coldness like the English, but from the humble opinion they have of themselves, a natural diffidence of temper, and a love of tranquillity. They are civil and unassuming, and though they do not anticipate your wants, yet they readily comply with your desires. Amongst themselves, however, and those with whom they are intimate, they are cheerful without being gay, and polite without being frivolous. You will easily find in this description my excuse for not decorating this part of my narrative with any humorous anecdote.

Lausanne, owing to its being built on a hill, is all either ascent or descent, and that so steep, that the town, particularly in the main street, where our Hotel is situated, is kept in constant thunder, morning, noon, and night, from the carts and carriages which are continually tearing up, or rattling down; and the ear is seldom relieved from the grating sound of stumbling horses and mules, who have a hard task to perform in this neighbourhood. The streets, like those of all the towns we have visited on the continent, are very narrow when compared with their lofty houses, and from this cause, when the sun is at its height the place is like an oven, which, with the

perpetual confusion, would render the town insupportable to me as a constant residence: but the remedy against noise and heat is too near at hand to make this an evil worth grieving about, to one who has no occupation to chain him to the town; for the environs are full of shady and romantic retreats, of just that extent of beauty that the fancy is permitted to reach, when it would paint to itself the untiring scenery of elysium, that country of perpetual spring. In a day or two we mean to pursue our journey to Geneva, at which place I shall resume my pen.

The time is now fast approaching which is to limit my progress in these delightful regions. While I am still writing, the Alps, the boundary of my course, are full before me, and continually reminding me that my long anticipated pleasure has been nearly all enjoyed, and is drawing fast to a close. While on the advance to pleasure the spirits are buoyant, and the expectation of novelty keeps tickling us as we go, we are in good humour with ourselves and every thing about us. If one object of our pursuit falls below our expectation, we overlook the disappointment, because we have yet so

many in store :—no sooner have we exhausted anticipation, and indulged in every thing that we went in search of, but the ungrateful mind, ever dissatisfied while there is a pleasure untasted, turns back with sluggish pace, and is scarcely thankful for what it has enjoyed. It is the misfortune of human nature, that our desires increase in proportion to the pleasures we have tasted. The poor have fewest wants, because they have been let no further into the secret of enjoyment, than the scanty gratification of hunger and thirst; their only wish is a more liberal portion of it, and as they seldom get that, they are not spoiled for the relish of what they have; but the rich, from their power to gratify themselves, soon exhaust the resources of pleasure, and having gorged to satiety at its most luscious banquets, go back with vitiated tastes to all its minor indulgences; till having nothing left to anticipate, they find out at last, that wealth can outlive even the relish for the blessings it dispenses. Under the influence of these gloomy feelings am I about to turn the helm, and steer my way back from all the delights which circumstances have allowed me to enjoy.

I shall diversify my journey home by taking a

different route from that which brought me here ; by this means a little relief will be thrown in my way to dissipate the vexation of a yet unsatisfied curiosity. Oh ! did but fortune favor my anxious wishes,—had she but dispensed her blessings with a less niggard hand, I should have yet to address you from the other side of the Alps and Appennines,—but it is otherwise—yet not without its benefit, since it will give me an earlier opportunity of paying my respects to you.

LETTER VIII.

Geneva.

I THINK I told you in my last that we were on the point of leaving Lausanne; we continued there however a week longer in order to indulge in the beauties of this delightful country; and which indeed might have demanded of us a much longer period, had we been as rich in leisure as we were in desire; but time, which stops for no one, has been running away at such a rate from us, that we have scarcely enough now left to see us fairly back again at the period we first decided on; but never let us be uneasy on this account, though our return may be delayed; for if our dear friends but keep as well in our absence as we left them,—if we but find them so on our return, we shall have lost nothing by our dalliance here, since we have breathed a sweeter air, have been smiled upon by a more inspiring sun, and in no way been losers, but by the absence of their dear society. Sweet is the blending of congenial minds! with this the rugged rock is smooth, and gentle is the freezing northern blast. Nothing can

be so lost to hope and comfort, but finds some resting place on Friendship's breast. Strip but my native land of those I love, and the rough billows that divide us now, may roar for ever betwixt shore and shore, for aught I care at their forbidding aspect.—No ! I am wrong—our native home, even amidst barren and deserted mountains, still holds us to her (wander where we will,) by some resistless spell, or magic thread, which she uncoils or gathers in at pleasure, but never quits till the grave snap the invisible link asunder.

During the week which we passed at Lausanne since my last letter, we did little else than range from one romantic retreat to another, till (if it be possible to be so) we were wearied with the unceasing beauties around us : I must, however, reserve my descriptions till we meet, for I cannot please myself with any of the attempts I have yet made to paint them.

In one of my rambles among the mountains in the neighbourhood of this place, moralizing, in my usual way as I sauntered along, on the variety of

human pursuits, and wondering what it is that influences the mind of one man to love the peaceful vale of life, and of another to brave the storms and tempests of the mountain top of it, I had unwittingly lost my way, and could discover neither man nor habitation within the wild prospect of these lofty regions. I began to think myself in the situation of those men who have allowed themselves to be carried by fortune to the dizzy height of life, with no other companion than the folly which had taught them to aspire to it. I had no business here without a guide, and after trying every winding way for more than an hour, I at last found myself only the deeper involved in a maze. I wished myself again in the humbler valleys I had left, and reproached myself with my foolish ambition. There was no course for me now to pursue, but a random one down again with slow and cautious step; and I immediately commenced my descent, lest, by the difficulties of the mountain, I might be delayed till night should throw her baneful influence into the scale against me. I was yet upon its craggy summit, sometimes enclosed within its barren cavities that shut me out from all the verdure below—and sometimes peeping through the breaks and in-

dentations, I could just distinguish the fir tree tops of the wood beneath me. I now heard the sound of the horn calling in the cattle, and directed my downward course as well as I could towards the place it came from, and with great difficulty at length reached the wood: the way began to smoothen itself here, and the country, a little below me, to wear the appearance of industry and cultivation; I now advanced with lighter spirits, and soon the cheering sound of human voices greeted my ear. I was drawn by the welcome attraction to a little cottage that had escaped my notice till my foot was at the open door of it, for it was at the side of the wood, and covered by it in every part except its entrance. My first question, of course, was my way to Lausanne, and to my mortification, I found that every footstep I had taken had carried me away from it, and there were more than eight German miles dividing us; the day was too far advanced, and I was too much fatigued with my late toil to venture back on foot that evening.

I was alone in this adventure, for the companions of my tour had gone on a visit to some friends in the neighbourhood of Lausanne, where they were

to pass the night ; I had nothing therefore to be alarmed at on account of my absence, since they could know nothing of it till I should have an opportunity of relating it to them in person. Thus circumstanced, I had no difficulty in deciding my resting place for that night, particularly since the master of the cottage had recommended me to pass it there. I have, thank Heaven ! a happy way of soon fitting myself to a state of things which I cannot control, and as usual began to feel myself at home. My host would have reconciled me to a worse adventure than this, as he soon showed that he was not sorry at the new acquaintance ; for I had not asked nor answered half a dozen questions before a flagon of wine presented itself, the flavor of which convinced me that he was not regardless of my opinion of the reception he gave me. While I was thus refreshing myself, his two daughters presented themselves ; they had just returned from their rustic occupation, and having deposited the milk they had brought home in the dairy beside us, were joined by a third female who had just come in, and who retired with them to rest. And will they not join us, said I, and relax a little after the labours of the day ? No, replied he, those who have

toiled find most relaxation in rest, and my two daughters must be up by day-break, or the cows will go unmilked. Good Heaven! thought I, and is it thus the task is set; to labor till we have no relish for amusement, and then take rest, merely to fit us for the next day's toil? This seems unjust,—yet I have studied life in much of its variety, and always found it tranquil when 'twas thus:—while he who follows pleasure seeks new scenes, and looks with restlessness for fresh enjoyment; but novelty, which cannot travel with the speed of his desire, soon deserts him in the chase, and all his variegated prospect fades at once into a tasteless and insipid void.

I have observed that there was a third female in the group, and though I had but a very imperfect view of her, I saw enough to convince me that she had not been bred amongst them; she was visibly confused on seeing a stranger in this solitude, and retired abruptly, as if to avoid the eye of inquiry; she had, however, roused my curiosity, and I could not refrain from observing to my host, that he had spoken only of two daughters, and I saw nothing in the appearance of the third to make him

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ashamed of acknowledging her. He told me that, like myself, she was a perfect stranger to him, and that her introduction there was as unexpected as my own: that about a year ago an English gentleman had brought her there in a faint and sickly state, and begged to place her under the care of his wife, (who was then living,) till she should recover herself a little, when, leaving her, in order as he said to procure medical assistance, he joined his servant, who was left in the valley below in the care of three mules, and having sent him to the cottage with a portmanteau for the lady, rode away, and from that hour he had neither seen nor heard of him. The lady was English, he told me, and had amply remunerated him for every expense and trouble on her account; she had never opened her lips to him on the cause of her coming there, nor had once expressed her astonishment at not having seen the gentleman since:—she was exceedingly affable, he said, and easily satisfied; she had lately adopted the dress of the peasants, by altering her own to their fashion, and seemed as if disposed to be a permanent resident amongst them. He told me that he had become too much interested in his unknown inmate, to regret the adventure on any other account than

her own ; but viewing it in that light, he could not but feel the deepest sorrow. Yes,—thou art right, I fear, thou honest rustic ! Some unpropitious star has guided her by its fallacious light away from all the happier influence of life, though hardly in its bloom. What could have brought thee here, poor girl ! to voluntary exile ? is it to wait till the rigor of authority be calmed,—till it cease to persecute with its wanton use of power, or interested hopes ? or hast thou bid adieu for evermore, to all thy earliest, thy congenial friends ? Whate'er it be, I cast no prying eye into the sacred depository of thy afflictions ; thou art here by thy own consent, and none can move thee hence who cannot lift the burthen off thy mind that keeps thee here.

Having compensated my host on the following morning for his treatment of me, I procured a guide and a couple of mules, and winding round this beautiful mountain till I could distinguish Lake Lemman at a distance, I dismissed my attendant, and proceeded on foot to Lausanne.

On the following day we left that town, and passing along the banks of the lake through about eight

leagues of garden ground, (for such only can I call this day's journey,) we arrived at the Château of the Baroness de Stael Holstein. There we alighted for the purpose of viewing the residence of this celebrated woman, or rather what had been the residence, for she was now dead. Shortly after our leaving Paris she had reached that city, in a very sickly state, on her way to Coppet, where her Château is situated, it being her particular desire to yield her last breath where she had drawn her first: in this she was disappointed; the violence of her disorder defeated her object, but death protected her against the mortification of the failure. That part of her desire which it was in the power of earthly effort to comply with, was performed: her corpse was conveyed to her Château, and deposited in the private vault, where rest the ashes of her father (the celebrated Necker) and of her mother, both of whom she loved with the tenderest affection. Poor de Stael! Her free writings in the cause of liberty, to the disquietude of arbitrary governments, had made her offensive in the eyes of Napoleon; and in the latter period of life, banished from home, she became an alien to her own inheritance, seeking the liberty she loved far away from the land she vene-

rated, and wandered about from place to place, where she was least likely to find it, till death called her off from the illusive beckonings of her phantom. Her political opinions might be wrong, but her motives were amiable : the overthrow of the fortunes of Napoleon would have restored her to the quiet occupation of her favorite residence, and nothing but length of life was now wanting to enable her to enjoy it ; but this was denied her ; she met the fate too frequently attendant on heroic worth,—she lived as long as she could suffer from oppression, and died as soon as she might be free.

As to the situation of the mansion, from what I have already written on the general beauty of this country, it must appear to you next to impossible to have placed it on an uninteresting spot : it is built on the brow of a hill, and commands the delightful prospect of the lake which runs at the foot of it, and of the towering Alps as far as Mont Blanc. The gardens are fallen into much disorder, and clearly show the long absence of their mistress. The Château is rather genteel than splendid ; nothing to be compared with most of the mansions on the estates of our nobility ; but if the scenery about it be taken

into the scale, the Château of Coppet will suffer nothing in a comparison with the best of them.

We sat down to rest ourselves in the very room in which she wrote her *Delphine*, a work in which, it is said, she pleased herself more than the moral commentators of the time.

A part of the building is appropriated to a private theatre, but which contains nothing worth making it a subject of description. In her chamber there is a portrait of her mother taken after death, at the foot of which she had written "*Tu m'aimerai pour jamais :*" this picture is covered with a curtain. I do not like these constant excitements to melancholy, which can produce no good, but only tend, through the habit of contemplating them, to chill the current of our happier feelings, and by reminding us too often of the nothingness of the world, teach us at length to consider cheerfulness a folly, and life itself a misfortune. The way to live still with the parent or friend whom death has snatched from us, is to paint them before us as they were wont to be, with all that living amiableness which made us love them here ; not in that look

which comes upon the face, when their last feeling for us has departed with the mind which once informed it.

We pursued our journey to Geneva, and arrived in good time to dinner. Les Balances, which is the first hotel in the city, was too full to receive us, there not being a bed to spare, so that we were obliged to put up with the second best, which is L'Ecu de Geneve; now though we were reduced one peg in point of our hotel, we were amply compensated in the superiority of the company at it; for two young German barons, who left Lausanne about the time that we did, were, like us, driven from Les Balances, and honored L'Ecu de Geneve with their august presence; and as they were placed in the room next to our's, we were regaled with the unceasing effluvia from their well-smoked pipes. Would you believe it? we think nothing of tobacco now, and notwithstanding our extreme aversion to it before we left England, I am sometimes at a doubt whether we shall not soon fall into the actual use of it ourselves; for though it has nothing on the score of flavor to recommend itself to our taste, yet it has high fashion to say something in its favor,

and more ridiculous habits than smoking have been established under that powerful influence. It is curious enough to see persons of the first distinction puffing out volumes of smoke from each window of a carriage and four, and spitting out of them with all the grace which adorns the benches of a London tea garden ; but custom is every thing, and each country has some national peculiarity, and sometimes worse than this. In Ethiopia, the women rub themselves with train oil and soot, and Prior, in alluding to this in his *Alma Mater*, says

“ Before you see, you smell your Toast,
And sweetest she who stinks the most.”

We dined at our hotel in a sumptuous manner ; I would not afford our hostess an opportunity of calculating much on the wide difference between an untitled Englishman, and our haughty German barons, so giving myself as many airs as they did, I ordered as good a dinner, and if I did not pass for as high a personage, I contrived at least to make myself as comfortable.

Now you who are a regular liver, who go to bed betimes, and that too with the advantages which pro-

per exercise, aided by temperance, can bestow, enjoy the first meal of the day with all the appetite of a healthy stomach ; to you, a breakfast is no unimportant matter, and as every thing goes by comparison, you have hitherto relished what you have had in these meals, because you have been ignorant of the extent of luxury to which such a repast may be carried. I do not actually call upon you to set off on a tour to Geneva for the purpose of enjoying this, for I know your great aversion to crossing the sea ; but if you were at Paris instead of London, I would certainly write to you recommending your immediate departure for this place, though I might have no other motive for doing so than the breakfasts of it. For myself, I really think I never tasted milk, cream, or butter, till I came here ; and to heighten the luxury of this, the bread they serve you with (the manufacture of which is peculiar to themselves) is the most delicious I ever tasted : now if I, who enjoy every meal with some degree of goût, can think so highly of a mere breakfast, what would you think of it, who consider every other repast so trifling in comparison ? Notwithstanding this dissertation on eating, I am nevertheless no gourmand, but as I have taken upon myself to give

you some account of my tour, and have not left out of it the unsavory fare which I have encountered, it is but right that I should give you a flavor of our more delicious entertainments ; and this I do, not more from the pleasure I experience in partaking of them, than from the justice that I owe the country which affords them. So far in favor of Geneva I may go, but no further ; of course I leave out in this restriction the manners and dispositions of its inhabitants, for I cannot be expected to have yet penetrated much into these particulars, and allude merely to local inconveniences, and the ill construction of the town. The prospect of the city, from an eminence about two miles before you enter it by the Lausanne road, is grand and imposing ; it impresses you with an idea of splendid edifices constructed with every regard to order and regularity ; you might almost imagine the description of Homer realised here, where speaking of Hector seeking Andromache he says,—he passed

“ Through streets of palaces and walks of state ;”

but, alas ! on entering it, the illusion is at an end, and the beauty that allured us in the distance, now begins to unfold her wrinkles and deformity.

The houses are lofty, and along the main street or market-place, which runs for a great extent through the town, are immense, awkward and unsightly arched-ways, constructed of wood, supported by ill-proportioned columns of the same material, and enclosing even the garret-windows of the houses from whence they project within their gloomy and unpainted concave ; this gives an extremely sombre appearance to the place, and prepares the newly-arrived visitor to be patient under the other imperfections of it : excepting the great streets which cross each other, and are at considerable distances apart, there are no communications from one point of the town to another, but by twilight passages which run under the houses, and through which you must pass whenever disposed to shorten your way to the place of destination ; these frequently run for a very considerable depth, and into which no other light insinuates itself, than what can find admission at the exits and entrances, and through the deep and narrow interstices, which divide some of the houses, in these almost solid clumps, from the roofs to these caverns at their foundation.

In a town of this construction you will have no

great difficulty in conceiving its nuisances ; and as if the saying should for ever be verified that the two extremes are nearest united, this gloomy, awkward, and disgusting city lifts its ugly head in the midst of all the richest blooming of romantic nature ; and the sweet lake Lemane, which rolls its light green waves through twenty leagues of ever varying beauties, is stript of all its charms on entering here, and sinks at once into a mere local convenience : no decisive bounds seem placed against its encroachment, and in certain parts of the town, foot passengers are obliged to pass over planks of wood from one side of a street to the other to avoid its overflow ; ashamed at the loss of all its loveliness, it rushes by in an impetuous course, and soon hides its degraded current in the bosom of the rapid Rhone.

In a day or two we shall set off for Mont Blanc, and from thence commence our retrograde motion home again. We propose passing some time at ——— with a French family of our acquaintance, and at which place I shall resume my subject.

LETTER IX.

St. Dizier.

IT is more than a month since my last letter, yet till now I have scarcely found an hour's leisure to devote to you; to resume however, after passing a week at Geneva, we set out for the purpose of visiting the Glaciers, and were far advanced on our way to them when the indisposition of one of our party forbid our further progress; the cold regions of these extraordinary phenomena would have rendered our advance under this circumstance extremely imprudent, and, with all my eagerness and long anticipation, I yielded of course to the dictates of prudence, and returned to Geneva, leaving indeed my curiosity ungratified, but quite alive to the hope of some other and not distant opportunity of rewarding its patience. We had nothing now to delay our return to England, and bidding adieu to the south, we commenced our retrograde motion on the following day, and slept at Lausanne; as we proceeded by the same route as far as Pontarlier, I shall take up my subject from that place,

whence we set off for Besançon, a handsome fortified town delightfully situated on the river Doubs, between which and the walls is an exceedingly pleasant promenade. We put up at the Hôtel National, and then took a walk while dinner was preparing, in order to view the citadel, but were refused admission in consequence of two of Napoleon's Generals being confined there. We then pursued our course to Gray, where we arrived just as the funeral of General Drouet was passing: he had been one of Napoleon's officers, and not in favor with the new government; he was buried without even military honors. Langres was the extent of our next day's journey, from whence on the following morning we set off for Chaumont, which we reached to an early dinner; it was Sunday, and this in France is sure to bring forth the gayest attire of every rank and condition: the three daughters of our host were not unmindful of themselves on this score, and waited upon us, alternately, at dinner in dresses that would not have disgraced a carriage, and with an air of vivacity that would have sweetened the vinegar aspect of a cynic; they were pretty girls to boot, and knew well how to set off beauty to the best advantage. I began now to think that our horses were a little

overworked, and that it was high time they should have an intervening day of rest. Indeed the town of Chaumont is open and lively, with charming walks in its neighbourhood, and so we conceived we could not stop in a more eligible place both for amusing ourselves and recruiting them. An inn-keeper's daughter is no very fashionable motive for delaying a journey, however handsome she may be, and I have therefore too much vanity to suppose you will impute my loitering in this town to any such inadmissible cause: there is an influence, however, in every thing beautiful, whatever the source from whence it may spring, that will in some degree baffle even the stoutest advocates for decorum, and though I was not detained a moment longer in this place by the attraction of beauty, yet as other causes compelled me to stop, I neither saw then, nor do I yet see, that there was any crime in devoting a portion of the time to a little admiration of it. I can hardly tell why I should enter into any explanation on this head, and the fastidious may think perhaps that I might as well have said nothing about it, but what matters how the fastidious think? I shall take no more trouble than I have done to justify myself, think what they may.

The Princess of Wales passed through this town on her leaving England after the settlement of her annuity, on which occasion she stopped at this hotel, and owing to the illness of one of her ladies, she remained a day or two in the place ; if this incident had related to any humbler individual I should hardly find an excuse for obtruding it upon you ; but as any trifle that relates to persons of such high distinction is always worthy of a page in history, who can tell but some future author in compiling the annals of our country, may be indebted to these memoirs for this most important piece of intelligence ?

Having passed our additional day with all the pleasure which the walks about Chaumont could afford us, we resumed our journey on the succeeding morning, and proceeded towards ———, the residence of our friends, with whom I told you in my last we intended to pass some time ; their chateau is situated about eight leagues out of our route to Calais, and I think I must say through rather an intricate cross road, since our cocher contrived to miss his way, which obliged us to pass the night in a little miserable hamlet, something like that of

We arrived however early the next day, and were received with that spirit of English welcome, which our friends had acquired in their residence amongst us, prior to the peace of Amiens. I should have told you that our intimacy with them commenced during that period, and though suspended by their taking the opportunity of that treaty to return home, yet our regard for each other had been too deeply impressed, by mutual kindnesses, to suffer much by our long separation. A few days after our arrival, we accompanied them in a visit to the Convent in their neighbourhood, where we were introduced to one of the nuns, who in her happier days had been their frequent companion. They promised to relate her story to us on our return, or rather the latter period of it, which was all they knew, the misfortunes of which had induced her to take the veil; an unexpected circumstance however rendered that unnecessary.

We now entered the walls of this dreary abode, consecrated to Heaven by the self-devoted, who within the narrow boundary of their lattice and rigour of discipline, can make themselves a world greater and happier than the one they have re-

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nounced. When we arrived at the grating through which all communication with the Nuns is held, notice was given to one of the lay sisters, and we seated ourselves to await the arrival of the person in question. She soon appeared, and received us with a gracefulness and ease, which shewed that her residence there had not been long enough to eradicate her worldly deportment; her features and person retained the vestige only of beauty, and her countenance had a rooted melancholy in it, which impressed me with the conviction that a hopelessness in every blessing here had brought her to this place, to bow in solitude and resignation to the will of Heaven, and seek her consolation in the promise of hereafter. She spoke much to the lady who introduced us respecting the charity which had been set on foot for the support of the poor of that commune, who are suffering the greatest severity from want of employment, and the failure of harvest of the preceding year.

There was a sound in her voice which called to my mind some distant, some imperfect recollections,—a something that seemed as if it had once been familiar to it, and suddenly brought back the days of my boyhood, as fresh as if I had been still advancing

in them ; I looked again at her face but could trace nothing there to explain the illusion. The effect on me was like that of a dream, in which the incidents of our early life are, by some strange commixture, jumbled together with recent events, and in which we live at once in the time that is gone by, and in that which is before us. What can it be, thought I, that gives to this stranger so peculiar an influence on me ? Is it that her voice resembles that of some long past acquaintance now out of recollection, and whose tones, though not name, are recalled by the sound ? Whatever it be, the shortest way to solve the doubt must be through her ; so rejecting further speculation on the matter :—There is something in that voice, said I, which tells me that this is not our first meeting, and though on looking at you I can trace no vestige of former acquaintanceship, yet when I hear you speak, I feel it quite impossible that I can be mistaken. Confused at the unexpected challenge, she was for a moment unable to reply, and I began to regret that I had troubled her with my conjectures ; for what I know of it, thought I, this sensitive nature of mine may, with all its harmless intention, have disturbed a world of troubles which religion and the calm of seclusion had perhaps al-

lowed to subside. The afflictions of life most torture at their onset, and when, by repeated efforts to subdue them, they have been lulled to rest, may Heaven watch over the repose they lie in, and keep the meddling fool away, lest he awake the sleeping venom to a new birth and a more poignant sting!

On your introduction to me, said she, I was not impressed with the slightest remembrance that I had ever seen you before, but when you mentioned the recollection of my voice, by which you would imply a former acquaintance, your features immediately recurred to my memory, and I recognise in them, if I mistake not, the friend of my earliest years. I should still have been at a loss had not her last remark, coupled with my recollection of a young girl, who had been under my father's care, quitting England about twenty years before to join a relation in France, told me that this recluse could be no other than Miss de F——; for of form and feature nothing now was left to call forth my remembrance of her. A long line of afflictions had held dominion there, and laid in ruins the once fair fabric that began to crumble before it was complete.

She quitted England in her eleventh year to join her aunt who resided at R——, and from that time to the interview in question I had neither seen nor heard of her. Her silence had never been imputed by me to a want of affection, for her nature was amiable, and could never be indifferent to the kindness of her friends; my father had attributed it to the troubles that then prevailed in France, which rendered all intercourse between the countries extremely precarious; he was sometimes however undecided on this point, since in the course of years he thought it scarcely possible but intelligence by some means or other must have reached him, had there been a disposition to forward any. This unwelcome conjecture would often mortify him with doubts upon her gratitude, till it at length gave way to the fullest belief that the havock of her country had first ruined the fortunes of her aunt, and then by a broken heart deprived his young charge of her sole protection: thus perhaps bereft of her only guide and monitor, he trembled for her youth and opening beauty, which he feared might fall an easy prey to the licentious habits of a demoralized country. He lost no opportunity that offered the slightest chance of intelligence, to learn if possible some tidings of her,

but was only able to verify his first fears with regard to the aunt. Ten years after the departure of his charge, he learnt for the first time that this lady had been dead nearly three years, and that her entire property, which was considerable, had fallen into the hands of an artful man who she had married during her niece's residence with her. This was the whole of the intelligence which he ever obtained ; every trace of the young girl in question was lost to him, and he soon after died without the least solace for his affliction on her account.

In ten years after his death, when every hope respecting her had ceased, and the grave in my imagination long closed upon her—when every means of enquiry had been exhausted and the search given up—the merest chance of an unexpected visit to a convent brought the long lost object before me. Oh ye that are borne down by cares and seeking rest in vain ! ye that have tasted, and are tasting still the bitterest cup of blighted hopes ! ye that have failed in all your efforts here, without one prospect of a brighter fortune ! look towards the tide of seeming chance, and be no more dismayed ; down that perhaps your better genius may be floating now, unseen

through the thick fog of present misery, and may arrive as suddenly as the sad subject of my present story.

She was not surprised at my inability to trace the slightest resemblance in her to the young creature who twenty years before had been my play-fellow ; her life since that period had been, with but little interruption, a scene of sorrow ;—and unremitting care in the end, said she, will always mould the form and features to its own impression. To give you the history of my life would only be to load you with a weight of anxiety on my account ; and pity, while it would pain you in the giving, could in no way soften the anguish of my recollections :—all that remains of me is devoted, and that which has gone by can return to plague me no more ; it lives in the remembrance indeed, but it rests quiet there while undisturbed, because I fear not the reproach of conscience, and have yet to learn for what it has been inflicted ; but as you must feel an interest in me from our early acquaintance, and, from circumstances, have a right to know by what strange fortune all trace of me has been lost since I left your father's hospitable roof, I will not hesitate a moment

to communicate those circumstances which must unravel the mystery, and acquit me of the ingratitude, which, to all appearance, I am involved in. In a few days I shall enclose you a brief account of my sad story, and leave my misfortunes to account for seeming ingratitude. Her stifled tears could now no longer retain themselves, and she abruptly left us uttering some inarticulate sentence, perhaps of farewell; I never saw her after, but a few days before we left our friends for St Dizier, I received the promised narrative, which accompanies this letter.

Yes! what remains of thee is indeed devoted—the fair anticipations of thy youth have deceived thee, and all thy airy castles are dispersed;—mine too are vanished, but I can raise up new ones still, to be again deceived by; they help to wear us out betwixt hope and disappointment, which keep each other nearly on a poise with smiles and tears;—but thy remaining life is one dark course without vicissitude;—a polar night—from which thou never wilt emerge to earthly morning.

THE STORY.

I arrived at R—— before I had completed my eleventh year, and found in my father's sister a sincere and amiable protector. Her first object was to proceed in my education, which had been already so well begun, and neither care nor expense were spared to render me as accomplished, as the sphere of life in which she meant me to move could require. Her fortune was large, and she had then no other dependant on it than myself; so far my prospects were favorable, and rendered doubly so from the ruined circumstances in which my father died. Under these happy auspices I advanced in my acquirements to the full satisfaction of my aunt. By the time I had arrived at the height of her expectation in this respect, and had attained my seventeenth year, a circumstance occurred that suddenly clouded all my blooming prospect.

A young officer of our garrison who had long in vain importuned my aunt to marry him, was now

about to be removed to another fortress, and pressed his suit, on the eve of his departure, with so much eloquence, that she yielded to his entreaty, and in a few days became his wife. It was my misfortune, I say, because circumstances afterwards conspired to make it so. I do not presume to arraign my aunt on that account, for I had no right to expect that she should forego her own well-being, and make a sacrifice of herself to my advancement. She loved me still as ardently as ever, and marriage, in itself, was neither fault nor folly in her, for she was young and handsome, and every way suited to render such a condition of life happy and dignified: but it was her misfortune as well as mine, as the sequel will prove; for notwithstanding his nominally high character and apparent worth, he was at heart the basest of mankind. It is not necessary to my own story, to detail the villainy of his, and it will suffice to say that he lives still; but my poor aunt and benefactress lives no longer; one year of cruelty drew the line to her afflictions, and thirteen years of remorse, if he be capable of any, have avenged the sufferings of my departed friend, who found in him that family, manners, and address, are but a sorry apology for the absence of worth.

Her property, from the want of sufficient caution, became exclusively his own, and her bitterest agony in her last moments was the reflection that by this rash act (as she would call it) she had blasted all my fair-formed hopes in life. On my account she even stooped to write to him for a settlement on me; but although it was a death-bed petition, and only for a part of her own, yet she died without the consolation of an answer. I never insulted her memory by soliciting his compliance with the request.

My aunt was more induced to this match from commiseration than love, and fell a victim to that tenderness of nature, that could not allow the suffering, of which she was the innocent cause, to plead in vain for the remedy which she had it in her power to bestow. She soon found out how fallacious a guide we trust to, when dismissing the admonitions of prudence, we are contented to listen to the dictates of feeling alone. Scarcely was the marriage ceremony completed, but the veil of hypocrisy, which had covered him, was removed, and the monster appeared before her in all his native deformity. He was now master of her fortune, and had no longer a motive to mortify himself by the

affectation of honor or virtue ; he had been under sufficient restraint in this respect while he was accomplishing his purpose, and he now felt master of himself in the resumption of his unrestrained, his unfettered licentiousness. Through his interest he procured the order for his removal to be rescinded, and he continued at R——. He began his cruelty by introducing his mistress into the house of his wife, which he made the scene of his debaucheries and gambling. An appeal to the laws might indeed have done her justice ; but her peace of mind had been already destroyed, and she had neither spirits nor inclination to apply such a remedy, since, at best, it could only enable her to avoid the violence of his temper, not heal the burning canker which was eating on her heart. She was not anxious for a protracted existence, and never rallied from the first wound which her feelings had received. The condition in which her marriage had placed me, was the aggravation of her sufferings, and she never ceased to reproach herself on that account, till the grave had closed upon her unavailing sorrows.

I hasten from the dreary picture I have drawn,

not to avoid the anguish it occasions, for I am used to that, and rather prone to brood over affliction than to evade it :—but I must enter now on a fresh scene, that will in no way dispel the gloom which my Narrative, even now, must have inspired. I was left without a friend in France, and destitute of every means of support but a small sum of money, which my poor aunt had been able to save from the rapacious grasp of the fell monster I have painted. What was I to do? Acquaintances indeed I had, and friends too, as in our better days they had professed themselves; but the friends that spring out of prosperity, seldom flourish in a poorer soil;—they soon dwindled and died away. I will not disgust you by a detail of the different advice they gave me as to what steps I should pursue; they were guided by one motive only, that of waiving every hope (could I have formed any) of protection from them; this gave me but little pain, for I had drawn no auspicious estimate of my prospect there. Their former professed friendship soon sunk into mere acquaintanceship, and then my afflictions so altered me, I must suppose, that in a short time afterwards they had no remembrance of me. I could not bear to be the outcast which my misfortunes had made

me, and I judged it best to quit a town that furnished such constant incitements to my disgust ; but where to go, and how employ myself, left me long undecided in my resolution. At length I determined to write to my former protector, and committed my letter to your father to the care of an English officer who had been a prisoner of war, and who by the influence of his friends had been able to procure his exchange. I had often, indeed, written to him before in my prosperity, without ever hearing in return ; but this I imputed to the probability that my letters had never reached him ; my not receiving an answer, however, to my last, which communicated my misfortunes, was too much for me, and my troubles, which perhaps blinded my judgment, led me to fear that I had become an outcast from him as from every other quarter. I should, however, have known him better than to suspect him, for he had been a friend long before he knew I should have found one in my relation, and I reproach myself, that for a moment I could have doubted him ;—but misery warps the understanding, and when we are lost to ourselves, we are easily brought to believe that we are abandoned by all besides. In the fullness of my unhappy condition, I thought myself

deserted by him then, and could not bring myself to write again to him.

I determined, as I said before, on leaving R——, with the view of procuring employment by teaching, for my education had rendered me capable of that. Thus in my nineteenth year, had my capricious destiny launched me into the wide sea of life without helm or compass, and unprovided against the tempest that threatened me, to be the sport of the varying winds, and to fall a prey at last to one or other of the rocks or quicksands that encompassed me: but we are not masters of our fortune, and must bow with resignation to that condition, whatever it may be, which we cannot control. I put up prayers to Heaven in this critical juncture, that I might not be deserted by that Being who is the friend to the desolate, and who hears, before the Hymns and Songs of Praise, the cries of the miserable and broken hearted. I now bade adieu for ever to this place of affliction, hardly knowing whither I went, and without recommendation or introduction. At length it occurred to me, that a lady, with whom my aunt had been intimate some years

before, was mistress of a seminary near Nantes, and to this place I directed my course. It was a long journey from my late residence, but it was my only prospect, and I judged it more likely to avail me if I should, in person, inform her of my wretched condition, than if I communicated my story by letter; it might, indeed, have been more prudent had I adopted the latter course; but as under no circumstance would I remain at R——, I was glad to avail myself of any excuse for quitting it.

On my arrival at Nantes, I found that the school in question existed no longer, and I could learn no tidings of the lady who had been mistress of it. This was a bitter disappointment to me, for on her heart and disposition, which I well remembered, I had grounded the strongest hopes of success. My spirits now misgave me, and I began to think myself devoted to misery; my condition was truly wretched, I had neither friend nor adviser, I was in the centre of strangers, and my money rapidly decreasing. To take lodgings in the town might have injured my character, and the time was fast approaching when I should have no other depen-

dence ; I therefore procured an apartment at a farmhouse, about a league out of it, and engaged with the mistress to board with her.

It was my intention here, if I failed in my endeavours to procure employment in a school, to support myself, if possible, by making lace ; which had often employed my leisure hours in my more prosperous fortune. My spirits began to rally under this resolution, for my good hostess gave me hopes of an easy sale for it. I soon procured all the necessary apparatus for this undertaking, and began my work at once, that I might encroach as little as possible on what remained of my property. I felt contented should this mode of life succeed—not that I was happy in it, for the society about me had nothing congenial to my taste or education ; but under all the circumstances of my desolate condition, there was something to be thankful for, in being able to feel resigned. Perhaps Heaven, said I, when it means to lower the fortunes of its creatures, sinks them first considerably beneath the condition it ultimately assigns them, that however reduced from their former happy state, they may feel, at least, the consolation of diminishing in

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misery before they settle in it, and by that means be enabled to bear it better. Such was the light in which I then viewed my depression, and contrasted with what I had suffered, I was at least comparatively happy : circumstances, however, have since proved that this was not the limit of my affliction.

In the course of some months I found the result of my industry more than enough for the amount of my expenses, and this stimulated my mind to further exertions. My good fortune, alas! was not doomed to remain long uninterrupted; my close application acting upon a constitution not naturally strong, and which had been much impaired by the misfortunes I have mentioned, had so reduced me, that I sunk at last under the accumulated weight. I was seized with an inflammatory fever, which deprived me of reason, and for a long time my condition remained doubtful : my cruel destiny, however, was not yet satisfied, and I was restored at length to sense and misery. My resources were now all exhausted, and I was too weak to have recourse to my usual industry. Oh ! what a weight of care would Heaven have spared me, said I, and what a blessing would its late visitation have been,

had it but proved as unyielding as my sorrows, and closed the scene upon an unhappy creature, who seems to live for no other end than to be wretched. Forgive me, Heaven! if in the bitterness of my heart I have been tempted to arraign thy wise decrees, and for a moment forgot, that it is not here we are to look to unravel the mystery of thy justice!

My good hostess was aware of the poverty to which my illness had reduced me, and took every pains to console me on that account; to the utmost of her power, she said, I should never be deserted, and cheered me to hope for better times. I lamented now, more than ever, my inability to discover my late aunt's friend, in search of whom I had come here, and for the first time since my arrival at the farm house, I now mentioned the circumstance to this good woman. She told me she knew her well; that about two years before she had given up the school owing to her ill health, and that she had gone to reside at a convent, not many leagues from thence, where she employed herself, as far as she was able, in instructing the daughters of reduced families, for whom there was a seminary there. I set off im-

mediately to the place in hopes of procuring some similar employment.

The good lady received me with the greatest kindness, and bewailed my misfortunes with unfeigned tears. I proposed to her my anxious wish to retire from a world that presented nothing but care which ever way I looked at it, and that if her convent could not receive me, she might, perhaps, assist in introducing me to some other, where I might take the veil. Alas! said she, it is ever thus with youth when it suffers from the world's frowns; retirement from it is to them the only remedy, and such a situation appears, if not a Paradise, at least an asylum from pain. But are they sure that the walls of a convent are thick enough to keep out the sound of the world's pleasures, when the first paroxysm of sorrow has subsided, and the mind left free for fresh impressions? Remember, my poor girl, that it is not disgust at the world's vanities, nor fear of its temptations, which brings you here; you have still a taste for its pleasures, and are only disappointed at not enjoying them. The only fit resident for the cloister, is that being who has essayed life's course, and who, having by constant self-denial at length

subdued all taste for its allurements, retires, not from the pains and sorrows it inflicts, but from its follies and its crimes ; or he who, still a prey to passion, dares no longer trust himself with the means of gratification ; but abandoning the field through fear, shuts himself up within the impregnable walls of coercive virtue. Are you aware of the insult we offer Heaven, when we enlist under its banners merely to shelter ourselves from the world's troubles? No, my poor girl, the world and its rational enjoyments are open to you still, and it will be long before you are arrived at that condition of mind which can warrant your seclusion from it. Rouse yourself from your present lethargy,—you are too soon subdued by misfortune. The man who has wronged your aunt and deprived you of support, is high in the estimation of his master for his military service ; draw up a memorial of the hard condition he has reduced you to, and through the means of the Empress Josephine, who is always accessible to the injured, procure its presentation to the Emperor : lose no time in carrying this into execution, and trust in Heaven, and the justice of your cause.

Her argument was too strong to be resisted,

and I immediately set about the task. With the aid of my kind friend I soon completed the memorial, and being furnished by her with money for my journey, and an introductory letter to a friend of her's at Paris, I set out for that city, feeling within myself a sufficient confidence for the undertaking. How cheering is the smile of real friendship! Before this interview, the want of such a blessing had reduced me to the very brink of despair: I was now full of hope, and mistress of that energy which she never fails to inspire.

I arrived at Paris, and immediately set out for Malmaison, the favorite residence of Josephine. I soon found an opportunity, as she was entering her carriage, to present my memorial, together with a copy of it for her perusal. The affable manner in which she received them quieted my agitation, and I felt, that had she permitted me, I could then have found confidence enough to have communicated my story to her. Your address, said she, is, I see, affixed to the paper, and I shall not lose sight of you. Before leaving me she had read enough to learn the nature of my case, and her remark was rendered doubly welcome to me on that account.

I had scarcely returned to Paris, before I received a summons to attend her the following morning. She then told me she had fully considered the subject of my petition, and sincerely lamented the injustice through which I suffered ; but suggested, in lieu of the memorial to the Emperor, that I should endeavour to move the offending party to do me justice, and threaten to appeal to public opinion should my entreaties fail ; for, said she, he has the ear of the Emperor, and will not fail to make his story good. It is a serious charge, and if your ends can be answered without bringing matters to this extremity, it will be the wiser step to pursue. I told her majesty, that could entreaty have moved him, I should not now have had to trouble her with my misfortunes ; that his own wife, who by his cruelty, he had brought to misery and death, had endeavoured, in vain, to move him on my account, even though she drew the most piteous picture of the ruin that would attend me, should he remain deaf to the last petition she could ever make to him. To this, which would have melted adamant, he remained cold and immoveable, and my poor aunt died soon after in the dreadful certainty that my condition was hopeless. What prospect, then, can

I have from such a quarter? and to intimidate him by the dread of public odium, is past my hopes; for he who can defy the public opinion of the city where he resided, and meet present abhorrence with indifference, can have little to dread in the detestation which is at a distance from him. I have avoided touching on these points in my memorial, that should he be induced, from fear of the Emperor's displeasure, to grant me some portion of the property which my poor aunt designed for me, he might be saved from the abhorrence into which such a disclosure would inevitably involve him. I am not seeking revenge, nor does the meek spirit of my departed relative require the sacrifice of her destroyer; my object is purely to save myself from ruin, and without your beneficent support my fate is inevitable. Josephine should not have been an Empress;—she was formed for the social virtues, and could not withstand the force of nature; she burst into tears at my concluding sentence, and dismissed me with the assurance that my wish should be complied with;—she told me she should make use of what I had omitted in the memorial, if the Emperor's objections should render it necessary, but not otherwise. This interview had taken a load from off my breast, and I

felt as if I should be more calm, more resigned, than I had hitherto been, even should this last effort be unsuccessful ; for since I had done all in my power to extricate myself from injustice, what I might suffer would be through the cruelty of others, and nothing from my self-reproach.

I continued in Paris for some time, conceiving it possible I might receive a second summons to attend at Malmaison. I had no other motive in doing so ; for the gaiety of the place, in the then anxious state of my mind, only tended to aggravate my sufferings by constantly interrupting my thoughts, without being able to dissipate my doubts and fears as to the result of my enterprise. I endeavoured to fortify my mind against a failure in it, and had enough to do with perplexing speculations on my future condition, should such be the case. My hopes, however, were not below my fears ; indeed, I was even sanguine in my anticipations, for I felt that I had a friend in the Empress, and that the justice of my cause with such an advocate, could hardly fail of success.

I remained at Paris for more than a month in a

state of uncertainty ; sometimes disposed to consider the delay as a favorable, and sometimes as a fearful omen. At length I received a letter from a banker there, stating that he had been instructed to place a sum of money to my credit, which he was prepared to pay in whatever manner I should think proper to direct. The sum amounted to precisely one-third of my poor aunt's fortune, exactly corresponding with the settlement which she had requested might be made on me, in the letter she wrote a little prior to her death. This fortunate result of my application to the Empress far exceeded my expectations ; and in the fulness of my gratitude I was about to set off for Malmaison to throw myself at her feet, when a lady, who I had never seen before, waited upon me to say, that the Empress was quite satisfied of my gratitude, and had desired that I should avoid any personal acknowledgment of it. I took that occasion, however, the only one which her injunction left open to me, to declare, that to the Empress alone, under Heaven, did I owe this release from misery and ruin. She then returned me the memorial addressed to the Emperor, with the seal unbroken, observing, that my object had been accomplished without proceeding so far. She then left me

to draw my own conclusion, as to the means employed in bringing this fortunate event to pass; and from the gentle and amiable mind of Josephine, I have little doubt, but anxious to save, even the worst of mankind, from the total ruin which a disclosure of his unfeeling depravity must have exposed him to in the Emperor's resentment, she had thought proper to rouse him from his fallacious notions of security, and had at length succeeded in bringing him to do me justice for his own sake, though he could not have been moved to grant it for mine. She had, indeed, saved him from the punishment due to his crimes, in the hope, no doubt, that his narrow escape would warn him of his danger, and teach him to amend a life of villainy that could hardly hope to be a second time so fortunate. These are, however, my conjectures only, for no further light was ever thrown on the subject. I returned thanks to the hospitable family with whom I had resided during my stay at Paris, and returned to the convent to give an account of the happy issue of my kind friend's advice, and to consult her on the measures I should adopt for my future guidance. I need not say how much my success rejoiced her, for the interest she had taken in

my troubles can vouch for that. My circumstances were now more than comfortable, for the interest of my property was equal to the expense in which I had been accustomed to live while with my aunt, and I stood in need of nothing but good advice to direct me in the use of it.

I am now coming to that period of my story at which the most interesting circumstances of life occur, and on the smiles or frowns of which, depends the joy, or misery of what remains of it. I have hitherto avoided all mention of love, because, as I would not allow it to obtrude, even when it first possessed me, on the attention, which, by inclination as well as gratitude, I was called upon to administer to the sufferings of my poor aunt; so in the picture I have drawn of my life, as far as she was in any way concerned, I have studiously omitted all mention of it, that I might not injure myself unjustly in your opinion, by appearing for a moment divided between the love of myself and my duty to her; but as every thing connected with my poor aunt is now over, both in the reality, and my sad story of it, I hasten at once to the subject, that I may pass through the painful duty I owe you, and then

bury the subject for ever in my silent remembrance : but for you, it had remained undisturbed in that noiseless sepulchre, where the lamp that watches it, is continually fed from the wastings of a breaking heart.

Some time before the unhappy marriage of my aunt, while every delight and blessing seemed ripening for my enjoyment,—when morning waked me to health and cheerfulness, and night still closed upon a cloudless day ;—in this bright dawn of life it was my fate to meet with one, whose fond attention to me so moved my young heart, that it began to feel a void within it whenever he was absent. By slow, but sure degrees, he still increased in interest to me, for he lost no occasion, by assiduity and respect, to press his suit with me. My aunt, who highly respected his father, approved the intimacy, and by her permission, he would constantly accompany us in our walks, and always made one in our evening amusements. He was handsome, which flattered my vanity indeed, but he was amiable too, and that made me love him. I will not dilate on the particulars of his worth, for love is apt to magnify all merit in the object of it, and perhaps, through that fallacious medium I have been taught to over-rate

him. To me, at least, he had learnt to be invaluable, and my happiness then depended on his continuing to be so. His father had been a merchant of considerable wealth ; but in consequence of the war had suffered severe losses, and was induced from the fear of further injury to his fortune, to abandon his speculations, and husband what remained of his property for the benefit of his son. He had been a widower many years, and lived now with no other prospect than his settlement in life : he was pleased with the growing intimacy, and just lived long enough to see it ripening into maturity, without one blight. In the midst of my suffering it has ever been a consolation to me to reflect on this, for he was the best of men, and ought to have escaped the sorrows that have since assailed us. But why do I say this ? my poor aunt as little merited affliction, yet she fell the early victim of the bitterest species of it. Let me not, however, question the decrees of Heaven : I have seen enough, indeed, to convince me that we do not always avert sorrow by virtue, for my kind aunt had never died of grief could this have been a shield against it :—here let the question rest. He lived, as I have said, just long enough to see the happy prospect of our

union, which soon after his death became clouded with the misery I have painted.

My lover,—for why should I disguise the term?—having paid every duty and respect to the remains of a beloved parent, was now under the necessity of quitting France for some time, in order to secure the property left him; for although his father had long since given up his mercantile concerns, he had not been able to obtain the full possession of what remained to him, prior to his death. To accomplish this object, his son was under the necessity of making a voyage to the Island of St. Lucie, and on the eve of his departure we exchanged our mutual vows of living only for each other. Oh! when I mention this, my burning brain destroys me.—Great Heaven! what vengeance had'st thou then in store for me? what thunders that have since hurled ruin on this desolate breast?—But all is over now, and apathy, which some call resignation, has dominion over what is left of me. Soon after his departure my aunt married; what followed this you are now acquainted with. I wrote apprising him of the event, but cautiously avoided all mention of the misery which attended it, lest I might interrupt

the necessary attention to his concerns, and by that means involve him in the mischief of this disastrous union.

Our daily increasing miseries now engrossed my entire mind, and I became almost an alien to myself. Borne down by affliction, I forgot my duty to him and to myself; my once pleasing task of writing to him was now abandoned; and become, at last, after the death of my poor aunt, as ruined in circumstances as I was in mind, I shuddered at the possibility of his indifference to me in my lost condition, and could not prevail on myself to apprise him of my misfortunes. I was prepared to bear poverty in its worst shape,—to meet, with patience, the sneers and contempt of all my former acquaintance,—I was ready to bend with resignation to death itself, under the gripe of famine:—but for deserted love, I had no shield, no antidote;—his neglect of me might make me doubt him, indeed, but then I should have hoped again, and while he said nothing I should still have trusted in him;—it is true, had my misfortunes induced him to abandon me, I should have lost nothing in losing him; yet as love was all I had left to live for, I dared not put it to the test:—deprived of hope

from every quarter else, I would not venture there ; it was my only prop,—my mind's sole resting place, —and nothing could support if that should fail me. Under this impression of mind, I avoided writing to him for some time prior to my aunt's death. I could not bear, for the reasons I have stated, to inform him of my ruined circumstances ; and fearing, if I wrote at all, that no caution of mine could protect my letter from being tainted with the wretchedness of my condition ; and this, aided by the unhappy state of mind (which had nearly turned my brain), induced me to neglect my correspondence altogether. I had not, indeed, heard from him for a considerable time ; but this seeming neglect, though it tortured me with fears and doubts about him, had been no motive with me for the silence I had observed. It often led me, however, to fear that some prudent friend of his who might have considered my property all that was desirable of me, had apprised him of what had happened, and that he had chosen silence as the least painful acknowledgment of his indifference to me. Bewildered with perplexities, and every way beset with trouble, my mind became a blank, and I was bereft, at once, of judgment to direct, or energy to execute. Thus subdued, I gave up

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the struggle with adversity, and threw my fortune into the lap of chance.

On my quitting R——, I left instructions with a servant of my late aunt to receive any letters that might arrive there addressed to me, and to keep charge of them until I should inform her of my new address. This, on my arrival at the farm house near Nantes, I immediately furnished her with, but nothing transpired in consequence up to the return from my successful visit to Paris. A few days subsequent to this however, I received a letter from St. Lucie, but not from the being for whom alone I lived; the address was in a strange hand, and my soul sunk within me; the joy of my recovered fortune was in a moment blasted; to share it with him was all the use I had for that, or life itself!—I was frantic with despair, and dared not venture further for a proof.—Oh! had he lived! I said, he would have written the address himself, he would have mastered even the grasp of death to do it, for he knew my sensitive nature could not stand a shock so sudden and overwhelming. I sunk under the weight of my suspicion, and was only restored by the tender efforts of my kind friend, who, during

my repeated faintings, judged it best to open the letter, make herself acquainted with the truth, and act accordingly. Her gentle but firm assurance that my fears were groundless, gradually brought me to myself again, and strengthened me to face the less, though still alarming, evil.

He had been prevented writing to me for a considerable time owing to severe illness, which on no account could he be brought to apprise me of, because he knew the distress in which it would involve me; he trusted in the daily hopes of recovery, and meant to defer all communication to me till that event. Instead of amendment in health however, his disorder had taken an unfavorable turn, and he was seized with the fever; he still issued his earnest injunctions that I should not be apprised of his condition, and thus from month to month his silence continued, till the alarming state to which he had been reduced, urged his friend, who had never left him during his illness, to apprise me of it without his consent. Thank Heaven! I exclaimed, thou mayest yet perhaps afford me the means to comfort him in his extremity, and save me from the agonising re-

proach, which I should otherwise never cease to heap upon myself, for the neglect of my silence, and ungenerous doubt of his truth and fervor for me. I was not for a moment divided on the course I should pursue, and taking leave of my amiable friend, I proceeded to the coast with the daughter of my late hostess, as an attendant, and embarked with her on board a vessel bound to St. Lucie. Throughout the voyage I never ceased in my prayers to Heaven to spare the object of my love to bless my future years, or if I asked too much in that, to prolong his life at least for one dear interview, and then unite us in the bands of death. What transpired during our passage I know not, the wind was fair they said, yet the time on board the vessel seemed longer to me than all my life before it; all were astonished at the speed we flew with, while to me our vessel seemed to crawl upon the waves as if it mocked at my impatience. At length we reached the looked-for shore which was to unveil my destiny, and show if there yet remained one earthly charm to make me cling to life; it was a fearful trial, and I shuddered for the event,—but my ruin was not yet matured, and I was left to tower above

misfortune for a while, till I should reach that height of happiness, the headlong hurl from which, could alone appease my ruthless fate.

I found the dearest object of my tenderness still lingering in disease ; the violence of his fever had subsided indeed, but he was so reduced from the length of his sickness, that I had no remembrance of him but in the tone of his voice : he had not strength to speak much upon the subject of my unexpected visit to him, but the little he said repaid me at once for all I had suffered on his and my own account. I have every confidence now in my recovery, said he, for my chief anxiety was for you ; I knew your love for me, but I did not see you, and could not tell how the change in your aunt's condition affected you ; my long silence too, which was for the best, though it might keep the knowledge of my illness from you, could not but distress you with my seeming indifference ; I could not write myself, and was unwilling to allow my friend to do so, because I dreaded the effect it might have upon you ; for such an admission of my own inability, would have even magnified the extent of my disorder, and that indeed has been bad enough. My

friend however, fearful of consequences, could no longer withhold the knowledge of my condition from you, and lately informed me of his having written ; I should not have had courage to require this myself of him, but considering circumstances, I was not sorry he had done so.—You however had not the same excuse for your long silence, and I have been left to conjecture a thousand things to afflict me on your account. I sometimes feared that your aunt's marriage might have weakened the link of affection between you, and for want of the truth I was left to imagine the worst. I often saw in my mind's eye, the innocent pleasures of the little circle, of which, before my departure, I had been permitted to form a part, broken in upon by unwelcome intruders ; and though I had every dependance on your truth and sincerity, yet I had fears for your happiness ; your silence only tended to increase the alarm, and on this agitation of mind my chance of recovery was considerably lessened ;—you are with me now, and my fears are at rest.

He was exceedingly anxious even in his weak condition to learn every thing respecting me since his departure ; but had my account been a cheerful one,

it would have been dangerous to have indulged him in it ; as it was, I was determined to waive it altogether, till his restoration to health would warrant the communication. He was visibly exhausted by his exertion, and I judged it best to leave him for a while, lest my presence should tempt him to further enquiries, and produce a restlessness that might endanger a relapse of the fever which had now happily subsided.

When I was once more alone, I began, for the first time since my quitting France, to calculate on the consequence of the step I had taken. In the violence of my feelings on his account, I was directed by no other guide, and the opinion which the world might form of me, on that account, had never once occurred to me ; but my fears for him had now materially subsided, because his fever had left him, and his physician considered that time and care would eventually restore him ; and in this calm of mind I found leisure to reason with myself on what I had done. The world, said I, ever guided by appearances, will condemn the measure, and my character may suffer through the fearlessness of virtue ; but what harm can this do to one, who looks for hap-

piness to him only for whose sake she has transgressed ; he will not desert me for the sacrifice made on his account, and possessing him, where can the slander wound me ? Should he have considered the step I had taken a rash one, I knew the delicacy of his mind would prompt him to rescue me at once by marriage from incurring the slightest injury through it ; yet for that very reason I was anxious he should see the measure in a different light, for to love alone did I desire to owe our union, and strong as was my affection for him, I would for ever have abandoned my claim, rather than rest my title to him on any other influence.

As he increased in strength, and when I thought his spirits could bear the relation, I communicated to him every circumstance respecting my poor aunt that had transpired during his absence from us. He was bitterly affected at the narrative, and wept at the melancholy change which so short a period had effected ; but when I related the forlorn and desolate condition into which her misfortunes and death had plunged me, he could restrain the violence of his feelings no longer ; but without waiting to hear the prosperity which followed, he pressed me to his

bosom, and called Heaven to witness the sincerity of his vow, that nothing on earth should again divide us :—No ! thou dear object of my happiness ! could I have seen but half the sorrows that awaited you when last we parted, no lure of wealth should have robbed you for a moment of the shelter and consolation of him, who had even then pledged himself to be your guardian and protector. No ! from this hour we are united, and one destiny, whatever it may be, shall be the lot of both. Though through long illness I have not yet been able to recover the property here which belonged to my father, and which from wayward circumstances, I may never attain, yet I am not without the means of providing for the necessities of both :—’tis true, it was my intention to have led you to a more splendid home than fortune seems now disposed to bless us with, but undiminished in the wealth of your affection, I am still too rich to feel a moment’s envy at the lot of any. I thought not of your fortune while you might have had it, and cannot miss it now that it is gone. We are still safe against the fear of want, and fortune that has dealt so hardly with us, may in her fickle humour return some future day to make atonement.

This disinterestedness of his love made me at once the happiest of creatures, and I rejoiced that the lucky turn of my affairs, through the influence of Josephine, enabled me to quiet his mind with regard to our circumstances ; for although I was satisfied that his then limited means gave him little concern on his own account, yet when he thought of me, I felt all the secret repining of his heart at our seemingly reduced condition. Blest in each other's love, and possessed of fortune too, we had the world before us in all its fairest promise ; the clouds which had before obscured our prospect were now dispersed, and we looked onward through the scene, as if the storm that had gone by had gathered all the mists before it, and left us one unruffled course of sunshine. Nor were our hopes delusive, for the horizon was as bright and cheerful as that which Eden saw before the fall ; and we were blessed with some few years of unmixed happiness. But I have passed the boundary since, through ruthless tempests that have quite overwhelmed me, and the sun's cheering beams can reach me now no more ;—the clouds are gathering still round my bewildered head, and night is closing on me ;—but why should I distress you with this gloomy anticipation of my

concluding narrative?—To resume; the sincerity of our affection was soon rewarded by our union; we remained at St. Lucie for three years, during which he recovered the greatest part of his property, and we were blessed with two dear pledges of our love.

The tenderness of my dear husband, and the sweet care which now devolved on us in our beloved children, left me nothing to desire,—the measure of my happiness was full. We had no motive for remaining in the island but the recovery of the property in question, and having now settled this matter we decided on returning to France, and living on a small estate which my husband inherited, and which, had his efforts failed at St. Lucie, would have been his only dependance. On the fourth year from my quitting my country we now returned to it, and took up our abode on the property I have mentioned, which was situated a few miles from the town of Laon. Here, at the foot of a hill, which formed a gradual slope towards the river Aisné, stood the Cottage of Content, for such we called our residence. My husband was romantic in his taste, and having little desire for splendor, which, he would say, tended as much to inspire envy as admi-

ration, cultivated the more solid enjoyments of life, and by his love and attention left me nothing to regret in our peaceful retirement. The circle of our society was small, but it was on that account select ; it was sufficiently extensive however for all the purposes of social enjoyment, and beyond this we had no wish to cultivate it. I had already experienced the reverse of fortune, and anxious to avert a repetition of her frowns, I thought the vale of life the best security, and sheltered from the vain and noisy world, within the deepest shade of its calm bosom ; there, encompassed by my treasures, I watched the gradual opening of their minds, and spared no pains to improve and cultivate them. By the taste of the once dear partner of my pleasures and my hopes, our retirement continued to advance in beauty till it became an elysium, in which, with the dear objects about me, I could have dwelt for ever. His chief occupation was to plan improvements in the grounds around our cottage, and attend the execution of them ; this, together with his superintendence of a considerable farm, which he had since purchased, furnished him sufficient employment for his time ; and whenever the delightful task of instructing my little ones was over, I always accompanied him in his occupation, pursued

by them, who never failed to enchant us with their inquisitive prattle. With little variation in our progress of life from what I have related, we passed through six bright years of happiness since our return to France. My girl had now attained her eighth, and my boy his seventh year, and their delighted parents would fondly speculate on their future advancement in life ;—but why should I trouble you with this detail, or why indeed myself? Robbed as I am of all but the remembrance, why should I cherish that? Alas! my tortured brain will cling to it, as to an only friend that is fast guiding me from all my sufferings!—no fresh disaster can affect me now,—my mind is callous to all other ill—my cup of misery can hold no more, and all my sad vicissitude of thought is looking back at those dear scenes of bliss, and then returning to the dreary void in which I am wandering now.

In the midst of that happy period of my life, while joy so smiled around us, that we thought our bliss beyond the reach of fate, a sudden storm overtook us in our glory, and laid our visionary prospect waste.

The war, which since the Revolution had scarcely

made my country once the scene of it, was now, through the failure of the Russian campaign, and its subsequent disasters, become itself the theatre. I need not enumerate the various contests which followed; suffice it to say that the advancing or retreating enemy never failed to leave behind them some trace of their revenge. I know not upon what principle they justify this, if the beings, on whom they inflicted it, were no parties to the cruelties which they sought to resent; and though in the rage of war we cannot look for cool and dispassionate measures,—and injustice will prevail through the irritated feelings of the moment,—yet what excuse can be found for the bloody calculations of that political hyena, who coolly writes it down as just, for the power of one nation to pay off on the innocents of another, the cruelties which the army thereof had inflicted on those of its own?

The war now raged with relentless fury through that part of the country in which our elysium stood; and our once happy home became the scene of terror and confusion; the valley in which it was situated was alternately in the occupation of the hostile and protecting armies, and my foreboding heart was

trembling for the event. The shady groves about us, where the opening foliage of the spring was beginning to enliven the landscape, disappeared, as if by magic, before their desolating march. The face of nature was withering all around us, and giving ample notice of the brooding storm: my soul sunk within me, I knew not where I was; my children too forsook their usual sports and clung to me for safety, but their home was full of danger, and I knew no other shelter. The cannon's roar began the bursting hurricane,—the sound was deep and distant; it continued through the day in one incessant thunder;—the sound advanced upon us, the hostile force was beaten, and the conquering army was pressing hard upon their retreating rear. The flying cavalry now passed our dwelling, and at a distance I saw the routed army pouring down upon us like a deluge; they fired the adjacent village, and were revenging themselves by every cruelty on the helpless peasantry. Oh God! the close of my sad story is at hand!—they forced our dwelling, seized upon me with brutal violence, and would have dragged me on with them. My husband rushed between to rescue me, while our two children hung upon us both, and called for mercy. They were

heeded not, their cries were useless—the fatal blow was struck, and my dead husband's bleeding body lay before me. I sunk upon the corpse, and asked for death as mercy from them! but, in vain: I called them conquered cowards, but could not provoke them to it,—nothing would do: my senses left me for a time, and when I awoke to reason, I found my darling boy still grappling to my dress as if he sought for safety; but, no! it was the grasp of death—he too was gone,—the mingling blood of parent and child will never vanish from me,—Oh! what a time has grief been torturing the poor victim it must kill at last!—death is the only home for me, nothing remains of mine on this side heaven,—nothing to hope for but the peaceful grave. My poor, poor girl soon sunk beneath our sufferings; she sickened shortly after, and left her wretched mother to linger for a while and then to join her. Oh! how I long for that sweet call of death that will unite us all again;—that will transfer me to that bright elysium which they now enjoy, and where the cannon's roar and bloody sword will never more disturb us!

LETTER X.

Calais.

WE left our friends soon after my last letter to you, and proceeded by the shortest route to this town. The road from St. Dizier, to the place at which we rested after our first day's journey, is hard and level, and away we went trotting towards Vitry le François, without stay or impediment; for poor Jaques seemed bent on showing us the mettle of his horses after their long rest.

I have nothing to say of Vitry, excepting that the accommodation at la Ville de Nancy was execrable for so respectable a town, and the charges too dishonest to be endured. I am not much disposed to back time and temper against moderate imposition, and would much rather put up with that than make myself uneasy by resisting it; but when the dishonest charge becomes so glaring as to exceed double what should be claimed, the most forbearing mind would revolt at a silent submission to such

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manifest injustice : it is not, indeed, so much the additional expense, as the anger we feel at ourselves for yielding like passive dupes to a set of vulgar extortioners. We had by this time become, through experience, pretty good judges of what we ought to pay, and on my life I would rather have thrown away twice the amount than have submitted to it. I told our host that I would not pay the bill unless, on his accompanying me to the Prefect, he could procure his signature that the claim was fair. After much *pro* and *con*, he rendered this unnecessary, by taking eighteen francs off a bill of fifty. This was a sort of passport to us through the remaining towns, and answered like an interpreter, to the unintelligible demands of the rest of these harpies. I parted from our host, assuring him, that I would warn the English against yielding to such dishonesty.

We now proceeded to Chalons-sur-Marne, which, like Ypres, we entered in a severe storm of thunder and rain. This town must have been in league with that which we had just left, for the host of the Palais Royal at which we put up, had arranged matters, on the score of charge, precisely in the same

way that I have just informed you of: I had, however, from my late success become bold in the use of my antidote against this poison; so applying it as I had done before, I sent him back his account with an abatement in the same proportion as at Vitry; but I found mine host of the Palais Royal a stouter adversary than the former, and by no means disposed to submit to my dictation:—Well, said I, you will go with me then to the Prefect, and his determination shall regulate my conduct. The Prefect, answered he, has no concern whatever with my affairs, and I insist on every franc of my account.—Now, said I, in return, as the host at Vitry has let me into the secret, I am resolved it shall not be thrown away upon me, and if you will not submit to my fair proposal, I will settle the matter myself, without the aid of the Prefect; so ordering the carriage, I tendered him the amount agreeably to my abatement, which he refused, informing me in a bullying manner, that I should not depart without paying the demand as he had charged it. To submit to a threat from one whose conduct was so palpably dishonest, was a little too unsavoury for my stomach: besides, I had gone too far to submit now, and knowing that I had justice on my side, I determined on put-

ting the threat of our unbending host to the test ; and on the arrival of the carriage at the door, I laid down the sum which I at first tendered, and handing my companions in, I entered next myself, leaving the surly Frenchman muttering something or other, no matter what, about les Anglois, as we passed out of the inn-yard.

Our treatment at this place was really unbearable ; for there was not a single dish at dinner which we could eat neither of meat nor vegetable, and the bread was nearly black and quite sour ; to add to this mortification, the wine was as bad as the other fare, a circumstance which had not happened to us before in the course of our tour, excepting at Ypres in the Netherlands. Now you, who know my great aversion to any thing like wrangling in these matters, will readily give me credit, that there was more than sufficient here to warrant the resistance which I made.

We passed through Rheims in this day's journey, but as there was a considerable fall of rain at the time we entered it, we were prevented making any visits to its churches or other public buildings. The

distance of Laon from this city was too great for what was left of this day, and we were again reduced to the necessity of passing the night in a little village; it was Berry-au-Bac, situated on a river which we were obliged to cross on a raft, as the bridge was rebuilding; the old one having been blown up on the retreat from Waterloo. In this village I slept in the same room that Napoleon had occupied on that occasion.

On the following morning we proceeded to Laon, which is situated on the summit of a high hill, and from whence we had a fine view of the country into which Napoleon marched with the main army, in order to form a junction with the two divisions under Vandamme and Girard, prior to the attack on the Prussians, who were posted on the Belgian frontier, the defeat of which, was followed by the battle of Waterloo. We left this place after having dined, for Le Fere, where we passed the night. You will, no doubt, exclaim on coming to the conclusion of this day's journey—What, pass through Rheims, and not stop to view the ancient cathedral, in which the ceremony of coronation has been solemnised through so many ages, on the kings of

France! Surely a shower of rain could not be sufficient to silence the enquiring mind, even in the very lap of information! It was not so at Ypres, in the commencement of your Tour, though the thunder accompanied it. True—but my little work was then only beginning its career, and every thing was new to it. The most trifling circumstance, in a foreign land, was of sufficient importance to swell the pages of the Infant Narrative, that appeared to me then, as if it could never reach the growth to which it has since attained; somehow or other, against my expectation, it has swelled into maturity, and by hook and by crook, kept pace with me through every stage of my advance, and is but a town or two behind me in the retreat. It is now rather seeking rest than activity, and in its indolence is leaving church and cathedral, city and country, with scarcely one comment. Its dissolution may be therefore considered close at hand, and its last gasp be looked for in every succeeding sentence. It is a type and figure of life itself. In youth, the relish for novelty finds flavor in every incident, however trifling, because every thing is new to it. In manhood, as the keen edge of curiosity becomes a little blunted, we rather select our objects than ga-

ther them at random, and if we abate in enthusiasm, we make up for that in the solidity of our matter : — but in old age, as the freezing blood is halting in the system, we begin to feel the hour approach which is to separate us from all concern in what we have so long contemplated, and as our interest lessens in the objects around us, we are left, at length, without even the desire to communicate the effect they have upon us. To this Old Age has my Narrative now arrived, and after another flash or two in the socket it must expire.

We quitted Le Fere on the following morning, with the view of reaching Arras that night ; and for the sake of shortening the distance, on our arrival at St. Quentin, we took the old road instead of passing through Peronne, which is the direct highway : by this measure we saved about nine miles of distance, without ever calculating, till it was too late, that time is equivalent to space, and that the heaviness and difficulty of this route were more than a balance, in the opinion of our horses, to the distance it had saved them. The fault, indeed, was chiefly our Cocher's, whose unceasing calculation was how to lighten, as much as possible, the labor of his be-

loved charge, for which he certainly entertained the most friendly regard; he was, however, mistaken on this occasion, since he materially added to their exertion by the difficulty of a road, which in several parts had become almost impassable, for want of use and repair. For this increased hardship to his horses, he continually reproached himself during the remainder of the journey, and on our arrival here, he was not yet in good humour with himself. But to return to my subject; our cattle were so knocked up by the uneven and soft road, which, by the bye, was little better than ploughed fields, that with the utmost difficulty we reached the village of Ronçoy that evening, which was scarcely more than half way from Le Fere to Arras.

When we were within about four miles of this village, we quitted our carriage in order to lighten it for our horses, which, notwithstanding this help, could by no means keep pace with our gentle promenade. On our arrival at a little hamlet in this walk to Ronçoy, we stopped to make some inquiry, and were very civilly asked if we wished to light our pipes; the compliment on this occasion was paid to a lady of our party; but why it was so I am not

able to divine, since through all our Tour I never met with a single instance, that I remember, of a female smoker; though tobacco is in such general use in every part of the continent which I have visited. I must therefore suppose from the long black habit which she wore in consequence of mourning, that she was mistaken for some officer of the Duke of Brunswick's corps, whose uniform, I believe, is of that sombre cast; but here again I am at a loss for the resemblance, as I cannot imagine how she could pass for such without the mustachios. I'll not, however, tease you or myself, with any more conjectures on this point—but enter Ronçoy, the outlandish inhabitants of which received us with vacant stare, wondering no doubt, who the devil we could be, tramping it on foot in that unfrequented part of the country. We walked, however, into the best looking inn, if so it may be called, and began our communication with the hostess and her family, by telling them that we had left our carriage to travel leisurely along the heavy roads, while we had proceeded on foot:—this piece of information, however unnecessary it may appear to you, was indispensable here, to allay the terror which the notion of a triple apparition had impressed them with; for such we cer-

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tainly appeared to these poor people, whose residence, since they had lived in it, had harboured nothing beyond the humble hawker and pedlar, and the neighbouring peasantry of the place.

The miserable appearance of the house, on my first entering it, made me tremble for chamber accommodation, in which particular we had already endured sufficient mortification. Through a shattered window in the yard I got a glimpse of what I feared was to be our lot in this respect, and began to form the idea, that it would be better for us all to pass the night in our carriage than submit to the nuisance. It was as well, however, to face the evil, and see precisely what it was before we decided, so ordering the——I must conclude here; the captain of the packet is this moment informing us, that as the wind has shifted fair, he means to sail immediately for Dover: to-morrow evening you may look for my arrival.—Adieu.

THE END.

ERRATA.

- Page 18, l. 3. for following, read follow.
29, 24. for I could give, read I would give.
54, 6. for attentive, read attractive.
106, 3. for is exceedingly, read are.
192, last line wants the word Somberton.

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